

Ecosystem Builder, Mentor, Community Supporter

Response	Main role in Virginia's innovation ecosystem?	When building your community, how do you associate yourself?	What aspects of the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem in Virginia do you find most appealing?	What was missing?	State's role in the innovation economy?	Gender identity	Home
3	Community Builder/Mentor	Mentor/Mentor Network	* Working with founders * Advising/mentoring * Capital planning	With respect to the important work/role that CIT has played, I have worked under both the current model and the past model where CIT maintained staff in the region. To me the latter was more effective because there was closer communication on initiatives and issues where CIT could be helpful. In terms of current issues, please continue to be active with the GAP fund with regional start-up technology companies and also help companies that are seeking assistance with non-dilutive grant funding.	Three roles: 1) Assist the universities with more proof of concept funding, as well as funding for IP protection (what is done now that I see is really minimal, yet the universities expect major paydays); 2) Evaluate the competitiveness of state of Virginia incentives vis-À-vis other states that enjoy greater start-up and investment activity (e.g., the small business investment credit program has a relatively small dollar cap compared to what I've been told exists in other competitor states); 3) Sustain matching dollar programs like GOVA for regional innovation based economic development organizations and initiatives (this is a long game and many regions lack the funding capacity at the locality level to fully participate, particularly in Southside and Southwest Virginia).	Male	Roanoke
6	Community Builder/Mentor	Investor Network	The individual ecosystem builders associated with VA4E are terrific. I've also found the Angel Investor Tax Credit program to be valuable.	There really isn't any engagement by the state in ecosystem building or tech-based economic development to speak of. There are numerous ways the state can engage and play a critical role in strengthening VA's tech-based ecosystem. From supporting EIRs at the universities, to supporting tech-transfer activities, to supporting community-based ecosystem builders, to supporting angel investor groups/funds, to supporting acceleration programs, to supporting SBIR/STTR submissions/and commercialization, to supporting...(I could continue, but I hope you get the gist).	We have the raw assets and resources in Virginia and the state's opportunity (role) is to provide a framework and support to connect and advance the development of those under-realized assets so that we can realize those benefits. As maverick and noble as GO Virginia is, it is still outside the "mainstream" state system. We need to all be moving in the same direction and focusing our attention and resources together. If it's a problem of political will and leadership, then let's find the right leaders go to SSTI in RI in Sept and see first-hand how other states have been doing this successfully for years. Help the ecosystem builders do what they do best.	Male	Roanoke
10	Community Builder/Mentor	Innovation Hub	There is tremendous potential.	We need to do a better job of capturing the marketable innovations that are being produced by our universities and research institutions.	Investment. Removal of barriers.	Male	Blacksburg
13	Community Builder/Mentor	Ecosystem strategy and support	Coordinated approaches to complex problems that lead to better outcomes. Buy-in from key regional anchors and trust building.	Sustainable funding streams and supporting a comprehensive talent pipeline for research and entrepreneurship from K-12 through universities and beyond. If you come out with significant student loan debt due (in part) to declining state support for higher education, you won't have the flexibility to be able to start a company	Providing the means for different regions to connect to one another to learn and share best practices and other information, to provide ongoing financial support for sustainable regional work (this is more than just a few thousand/year as sponsorship of a tech council!), and to aggregate efforts to create economies of scale where appropriate. Side note: in terms of economies of scale, what could the state do to make health insurance available and affordable for startups/entrepreneurs?	Female	Christiansburg

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14	Community Builder/Mentor	Tech Council - we facilitate, connect, liaise, on a "as needed in this case" base to any and all of the others mentioned in question 2	everybody wants to help, some can more and some can less, but all are willing to do what they can. Many are cooperative and complementary with others, and other localities.	I know that much has been done and more is already available, but I continue to hear that still not enough venture capital is available. Additionally, often potential investors don't understand the new economy or tech potential in the proposed venture, and decline to be involved. BUT - I don't know that the state can help with lack of knowledge!!!	I like what has been done	Female	Harrisonburg
18	Community Builder/Mentor	Innovation Hub		Funding	Support	Female	Covington
19	Community Builder/Mentor	Mentor/Mentor Network	The energy and job creation.	Funding for accelerators	Funding	Male	Harrisonburg
20	Community Builder/Mentor	Mentor/Mentor Network	The Small Business Development Centers actively serve New Entrepreneurs as well as Established Businesses in a wide range of start-up and on-going business challenges, issues, and questions. We meet clients "where they are" meaning their agenda for assistance, not ours. This is the most appealing aspect - being of direct one-on-one assistance, with experienced advisors, practical solutions, and complete confidentiality.	funding to assist the SBDCs in meeting rural and small town needs	Do not overlook the important influence and tax base of the small retail, manufacturing, and service businesses who make up the base of towns and cities. They may not be innovative "yet" but are integral parts of our state economy and culture. They are what visitors and new residents seek out for their needs.	Female	Harrisonburg
23	Community Builder/Mentor	Business development advisor	Building entrepreneurial mindsets in communities, building entrepreneurial support resources and Guiding entrepreneurs toward success	Support for the small business development center network and the even larger role they could be playing in Virginia's economic development	To provide support for the private sector	Female	Staunton
25	economic development		Current assets and potential for growth	Lack of awareness, collaboration and silos.	Workforce and maintaining a welcoming business environment. Marketing the assets that are available to assist.	Male	Harrisonburg
26	Community Builder/Mentor	Innovation Hub	Fragmented pockets of energy and passion show that there is eagerness and a need to build a connected network of ecosystem supporters, founders, CEO's etc.	Provide a common platform as a tool for a network of ecosystem builders to communicate efficiently and share information (assets, needs, mentors, research opportunities, etc.) effectively and consistently across VA. This would be coordinated by each region in a Hub-and-Spoke model, both state level to regional node and regional node out to various communities to manage	See response to question 4. Also, there is a huge need for two more critical pieces: 1 - Pool of grant funding for intellectual property development, prototyping, and testing 2 - Funding and expanding the ICAP program run by SBDC for an innovation and entrepreneurial training program aligned with NSF i-Corps and Lean Launchpad principles.	Female	Harrisonburg
27	Community Builder/Mentor	Accelerator	Research coming out of Universities	Capital / Coordination by Government	Make Virginia the easiest place to commercialize intellectual property coming out of universities. Universities are NOT going to get rich making sure they get a "cut."	Male	Roanoke
28	Community Builder/Mentor	Innovation Hub	The energy at the local level as each region works to rebuilds its economy around technology and health sceiences	The state can help by establishing regional local satellite teams that sit within the regions and help enable innovation.. ecosystem building etc. we need the state to employ the regions and ensure there is funding in place to drive the transformation	See answer to previous question.. key is to ensure fundings there and sits in each region to drive the innovation engine	Female	Roanoke

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31	Community Builder/Mentor	Mentor/Mentor Network	The business advising/mentoring and training for start-ups and entrepreneurs.	Support and expansion of the statewide ICAP, a program of GMU and the Virginia SBDC Network to support entrepreneurs with commercialization. ICAP partners with incubators, accelerators, universities, funders to be the advising and mentoring program to complement their efforts.	Virginia should invest in expanding and building out the existing statewide network of SBDCs which deliver advising and training to small businesses across the state. In addition to expertise to assist 'main street businesses', we have specialized services and expertise for commerciaization, exporting, government contracting, veterans. www.virginiasbdc.org ; www.vaptac.org ; www.cbponline.org	Female	Alexandria
32	VA Small Business Development Center		Growing/retaining current business	State support/promotion of the VA Small Business Development Centers and funding to support them	Upgrade broadband service in all parts of VA to attract/retain innovative business and allow VA to compete for innovative companies	Female	Frederick County
33	Community Builder/Mentor	Mentor/Mentor Network	The talent and creativity of entrepreneurs and innovators.	One-on-one engagement and assistance with regulatory processes and regulations. Human contact rather than referral to internet website.	Greater access to Subject Matter Experts	Female	Tazewell
35	Community Builder/Mentor	I work accross all of the above.	Potential of states research universities and federal labs to commercialize research.	Weak to poor tech transfer programs in most of Virginia's research universities. Weak regional entrepreneurial support ecosystems outside NOVA. Lack of in-state risk capital sources.	The state should form an economic development org, sister to the VEDP, located in Richmond. It should focus on helping the states research universities to translate and commercialize research and build the regional innovation ecosystems: organized and funded accelerators; organized angel capital groups, etc. The new org must adopt a distributed model- ie provide support to regional ecosystems which lack the funding capacity to stand-up the requisite resources.	Male	Blacksburg
36	Community Builder/Mentor	Mentor/Mentor Network		More access to capital for businesses that may not be in what we traditionally think of as high growth or innovation.		Female	Lynchburg
37	Community Builder/Mentor	Mentor/Mentor Network	I spent my lifetime career in corporate research, and I know that innovation is essential if we are to maintain economic prosperity in the Commonwealth. There is no one recipe for building a strong E and I ecosystem. Be creative in building an incentive package.	Unfortunately, Virginia, and every other jurisdiction in which I have worked over the years, tends to make entrepreneurship and innovation too bureaucratic. By definition, these activities are not form fitting.	We need to determine how we can be flexible and respond to opportunities as they arise. This concept is anathema to those of us who have served in elected capacities, but if we can remove that hat and don our innovative hat, we just might find a way to legislate reasonably flexible incentive programs that will motivate innovation.	Male	Danville
38	Community Builder/Mentor	Innovation Hub	Building R&D capacity; supporting commercialization; and building a scientific workforce	Partnerships with universities and labs	Facilitator and broker	Male	Lynchburg

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43	Community Builder/Mentor	Investor Network	The establish higher learning institutions and the collaboration/competition between them. Allows for the attracting of next generation of Virginians, whom can contribute to growth of the inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem of the state.	There is lack of investment and awareness towards other technological innovation areas than bread and butter approach to Data Analytics or Cyber Security. Areas like Game Design, Animation, and Distance Education could flourish as major sub-industries supported with the establish creative tech talent of the state. Critical piece in this is that all disciplines are now base in some form of technological innovation, which can either make or break Virginia's economic competitiveness in the US and abroad. State and VEDP could take direct role in addressing the need for major overhauls in higher education (outside of STEM fields) with pushing software training and real life application experiences. Blending of liberal arts thinking with practical knowledge/skills is key to train next generation of entrepreneurs or more largely Virginia's workforce.	Virginia's role should be the incubator and playground of entrepreneurship. This can be achieved with much larger investment in higher education and lowering the cost to attend before it becomes unachievable for anyone. It can be easily attract much larger and vibrant pool of talent by ending "Out-State Tuition", which would both solve some pressure in generating more computer science or related field graduates while also easing amount student debt acquired by these individuals. Similarly, direct focus should be towards the existing student debt crisis in efforts for the State to press Federal Lawmakers in tackling the issue head on, while also being leader in providing ways to have debt forgiven by VA's programs. It ultimately effects the successful and continue development of entrepreneurial ecosystem if these future business leaders/innovators are unable to invest due to lack of financial resources tied up into debt repayments.	Male	City of Alexandria
50	Community Builder/Mentor	Mentor/Mentor Network	The unique assets of our state: proximity to DC, universities, corporations, natural resources... but also their diversity for each region in the state	1: Resources to support early stage companies prove out their concepts (basic living stipends, \$ for patents) 2: access and support from state agencies where support for innovation is needed (insurance, etc). The state should be leaning in to support new business models, but not all agencies are leaning in to support "disruption" in the state	Provide resources to build infrastructure that supports continuous innovation and disruption, success and failure/learning...	Female	Richmond
53	all of the above as tradw/membership association CEO		creativity and making a difference in the growth of our region.	increased incentives	tax and other incentives for development and growth.	Female	McLean
54	Community Builder/Mentor	Accelerator	Potential for high growth	Image of NoVA as a government zone not a high tech area Not enough major players Not enough customers for high tech products that are not government related	Fund real high tech growth Fund real research that is not just government centered	Female	McLean
58	Community Builder/Mentor	Innovation Hub	Partnerships, collaboration, venture capital, incentives & resources for entrepreneurs, a culture of innovation and support, sustainable practices and appropriate real estate	Innovation resources, competitive grants for innovators and entrepreneurs	Innovation grants are needed, as well as specific programs to support commercialization of research and entrepreneurship	Female	Botetourt county
60	Community Builder/Mentor	Mentor/Mentor Network	Free resources	Mentor Program. Incentives to persuade larger company entrepreneurs to become mentors to new businesses.	Funds to support mentors, programs, and training to help with the innovation economy.	Female	Galax

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85	Community Builder/Mentor	Accelerator	there are a number of events at differing levels of commitment for pitching ideas and businesses	educationally, there's not much done to help businesses build scalable marketing systems. There's a lot more in the "sales" training realm, but business ready to go national have few resources to help them develop internal operations and connect with ideal service providers.		Female	Norfolk
87	Community Builder/Mentor	Incubator	We have many, if not all of the pieces necessary to create a very special ecosystem. Education, industry, military, aspiring entrepreneurs and retired executives willing to give back.	There is no clear path for entrepreneurs to follow. There is way too many competing organizations that duplicates efforts. At the end of the day, entrepreneurs want to create a successful business, they can't be constantly distracted by competing organizations/events for their time. An endorsed pathway of approved/vetted organizations would be beneficial for businesses to follow.	The state's role would be to streamline and recognize an efficient path/model to follow. State funded organizations could be streamlined by eliminating duplication of funding/efforts. Businesses could qualify for incentives by following a recognized path and it would be funded by the savings of duplicated efforts. In short, the state should help eliminate some of the "noise" in the entrepreneurial space.	Male	Yorktown
104	Ecosystem builder		My efforts are focused on Southwest Virginia, and changing the culture of this region to see that entrepreneurship and innovation is a way to allow SWVA to thrive is most appealing to me.	Marketing and showcasing the entrepreneurs of Virginia. Additional early stage risk capital in economically challenged region, until private funds are established.	The regions of Virginia are all at different stages in their entrepreneurial ecosystems, and policy should be tailored to address the needs of all regions and not a blanket policy for the whole state. Also funding the BEE Grant program offered through DHCD would be a great first step.	Male	St. Paul
106	Community Builder/Mentor	Accelerator	The willingness of mentors in our region to lean in for the founders and the resources on a volunteer basis.	Sustainable funding from public and private partners that share a long-term commitment. Corporate partners willing to act as mentors and customers for startups. Pre-seed stage funding. Collaboration between existing entrepreneurial resources around VA to leverage what we have already built to be stronger together.	As noted in Brad Feld's book on building startup communities, government's best function is as a facilitator and funder. In that vein, I would like to see the state play a central role in supporting existing resources that have proven their impact by providing sustainable funding; Facilitate regional resources' efforts to provide consistent pre-seed/seed funding for early startups; play an active role in creating a statewide organization similar to NC Idea in North Carolina that targets funding and supports regional efforts to provide long-term funding and a statewide marketing arm to tell our entrepreneurial story better.	Female	Norfolk
108	Disrupter		Right now, I am most interested in new and semi new horizons such as legitimatizing the relatively new discovery of graphene, putting unmanned vehicles to work, making marijuana as accessible to sick patients as any other controlled drug (major bucks for VA and a wonder drug for patients after they get home from the hospital), and so on.	For far Southwest Virginia, the gap is the lack of business people being present at the table of many serious discussions of this sort.	I believe the states role is to listen more to business and less to higher education and nonprofit organizations. Listen more to people who know how to make money and less to people who know how to spend it.	Female	Wise

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109	Community Builder/Mentor	Mentor/Mentor Network	Bringing technology investment to the valley	Currently, the technology sector is largely dominated by NOVA, Richmond, and VA beach. The Shenandoah is considered one the top areas to live in the country and yet we lack significant technological presents outside the university.	I have not been following.	Male	Rockingham
111	Employee for an innovative company		Community-driven network of people who want to help one another succeed. The cost of living in our part of Virginia is very reasonable and we have some of the best universities in the country close by.	Our company is funded by an SBIR grant through the Department of Defense. We've been fortunate to have success in this realm and would like to help other companies do the same. Unfortunately there were very few knowledgeable resources about this program, and other federal grant opportunities, when we originally began pursuing them. We would like to see more emphasis placed on building an entrepreneurial ecosystem that is at least aware of opportunities to help society and national security through federal funding.	I believe the state's role in developing the innovation economy can be boiled down to three main tasks. First is creating an attractive place for innovators to settle, second is helping those innovators access capital so to make an attractive environment for investors, third is to inform people of the previous two tasks so as to ensure people around the world know that Virginia is a worthy place to relocate and start a business. How these tasks will be accomplished is an entirely separate conversation and should include economic incentives, demonstrating a high quality of life, helping businesses understand the access to qualified talent, and a support network that encourages the right kinds of business. The federal opportunity ecosystem can be a critical partner in these efforts as those funding arms can help build sustainable, long-term, mission oriented companies. Every state should be cautious in following the Silicon Valley model of fail fast and often in order to win big on a risky bet. Unfortunately these types of Unicorn success stories are few and far between and a large majority of companies that follow this path end up as failed startups that do very little for local economies. This model is driven by venture capital that does not always have the	Male	Afton
115	Community Builder/Mentor	Mentor/Mentor Network	Investing resources in u see represented founders	Regional investment funds for underserved Founders. Entrepreneurship Grant funds for start up founders	Bridging the equity and investment gap to underserved founders	Male	Richmond

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119	Community Builder/Mentor	Investor Network	Some of the best Ideas for innovation I've heard come from Senior projects at universities, where students get together to create a product or service, and pitch these ideas after completing their market analysis's, business plans and models, and really think about a long term vision.	State hosted Pitches? Perhaps invite investors and mentors to take part?	If there is a Drive from a Virginia resident to do something, but there are hurdles to jump to get there, remove the hurdles. A great example is distilled spirits in Virginia. The laws and policies are directly impacting the craft spirits industry from exploding in Virginia. You walk into a Virginia ABC store, and its made perfectly Clear Virginia has much improvement to make, as it's incredible difficult to find any products that are made in Virginia, from Virginia sourced ingredients. But it's incredibly easy to find many other products from surrounding states. Technology innovation seems the same way - I'd love to see the Shenandoah Valley become the East Coast Silicon valley - This can be accomplished by removing road blocks and inviting innovation to plant their seeds here.	Male	Rockingham
123	Local government		The brainstorming of new ideas and attractiveness it offers small communities	Direction, guidance, and reasonable funding options	Competitive pools of funding, where a new small business must have certain requirements met, training completed, financial plans, and sustainability to get funds	Female	South Hill
124	Community Builder/Mentor	Mentor/Mentor Network	Technology innovation , Teleworking from SWVA	DOD and state regulations that prevent much technology work being done across the state.	Seed more projects in SWVA and Southside. Promote some of NOVAs technology work to be done in rural Virginia	Male	Wise County
133	Community Builder/Mentor	Mentor/Mentor Network	The investment capacity is in place to fund innovation and a workforce with sufficient capabilities is in place. Capacity, however, is another issue.	Entry level training in high tech, affordable housing and tax incentives are light to missing at the mid-tier level, which is where the most growth takes place.	General R&D, workforce readiness and supply, economic incentives and a path for veterans to commercial businesses.	Male	Falls Church
140	Community Builder/Mentor	Investor Network	CIT. Go Virginia. Shen Valley Angel Investors. However, I am really not very aware of the various programs offered by the State of Virginia. Granted, the entrepreneurial community is very fractured because it seems to be community specific.	Perhaps one single website that has everything on it. Not a new resource other than helping to organize the current resources that are available. This seems to be a problem all over the State. And when it is created, it has to be marketed so people are aware of the site.	Again, could the state just organize a website that would have every region, every community, every known resource, and let the business community know everything available. (and put some ongoing resources to market it)	Male	Harrisonburg
144	Interested		Small local businesses development	Recycling	Aid local governments to develop plans	Female	Abingdon
145	Community Builder/Mentor	Accelerator	Help small businesses	Encourage small businesses and technical training	The state does not end at Roanoke. Southwest Virginia had a great work ethic and could be again with jobs that pay more then minimum wage. Let's have those in Richmond try living on a minimum wage income for 1 month.	Female	Town

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151	Community Builder/Mentor	Innovation Hub	the community and connections	marketing and early stage funding; capital infrastructure support for the growth of smaller companies with capital intensive needs and high-paying jobs	the Commonwealth's role is to nurture and supporting emerging companies in "if not but for" situations. It is not to control - but rather to provide meaningful support in tangible ways without restrictions that are counterproductive. There should also be an alignment of resources with decisions made by a founder first mentality - not from those who are self-served.	Female	Chesterfield
155	Interested citizen		Nothing. I don't even know what it is.	Get out of our way. Less regulation and less taxes.	Reduce regulations and taxes and let businesses innovate without government involvement.	Male	Abingdon
156	Community Builder/Mentor	Mentor/Mentor Network	Generally low cost of living and expenses; favorable legislature in general when it comes to entrepreneurs.	The biggest factor is the drain of talent from SWVA, the former coalfields. This means other things are leaving as well - the best teachers, other business and services; Secondly, internet connectivity. In SWVA internet connection speed is 10bps and called "high speed". When it works. Abysmal infrastructure in this region and when it is not reliable then small businesses, who do not typically have access to tech support, suffer greatly.	Stop the drain from SWVA. Quality of life is excellent and services are paltry. Resources go to Richmond, NoVa and Tidewater. There is enough human capital and private capital to take care of those areas. Underserved rural areas are suffering and it will get worse if we don't keep businesses interested in SWVA. We must keep talent.	Female	Abingdon
159	Community Builder/Mentor	volunteer leader	the availability of grants to support community growth initiatives.	more attention to the needs of the 19 county southwest Virginia region.	The State could provide resources to determine the economic impact of the Virginia Creeper Trail on the SW Virginia region. Tourism is the life blood of these communities.	Male	Abingdon, VA
163	Community Builder/Mentor	Accelerator	Assisting SB and Start-ups	Increase the role and capability of CIT to assist start-ups. Strength ties between CIT and universities.	Foster an environment that assists in business creation with favorable tax policies, mentorships, etc.	Male	Leesburg
164	working to establish an example of regenerative land use within town limits		I would cite the example of Polyface Farm as developing and living out regenerative agricultural practices to move Virginians (and others) into not only using land sustainably but actually repairing the longterm damage we have created over many, many years of misuse. Similar practices are being developed and used at every scale not just farm scale and need to be spread much more widely.	I am not entirely clear how much agricultural support is federal and how much is state but what support there is had tended to go to large-scale agribusinesses using destructive, extractive methods. At least some effective portion of this money needs to be diverted to smaller-scale regenerative farms and garden projects to build the soils and infrastructure we need for both healthier foods and the ability to adapt to intensifying climate change.	I have not been following the legislature closely enough to comment.	Female	Abingdon
167	Community Builder/Mentor	Innovation Hub	Unique collection of entrepreneurs and visionaries from various industries and sectors. Unique military/defense identity, port identity	Number one thing is the fact that there's massive talent in the region/s, but it's tough to bring them all together, build up cohesive interest in each other's projects, or even just plain awareness that we all exist, aside from just the standard networking stuff.		Male	Norfolk

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171	Community Builder/Mentor	Mentor/Mentor Network	Incubators for small business	I do not know.	State leaders need to take a holistic approach when directing the path of business growth. Common themes that should reflect sustainable energy policy and quality of living issues such as open space, recreational resources, and bottom-up economy. State leaders should ensure support for small locally owned businesses, especially in the area of technology. In far Southwest Virginia for example, small innovative tech companies get bought out by larger corporations and the founder then goes on to additional innovative projects. Small and local means competitiveness in the business environment.	Prefer not to say	Washington County
173	Community Builder/Mentor	Innovation Hub	The Staunton Innovation Hub is working with VEDP/SVP/GOVA to help further the development of the entrepreneurial ecosystem and discussing the establishment of a Virginia Innovation Hub network. The network would share the support system, development & growth programs, resources, mentors and so on. We feel we would be an asset to your mission.	It would be helpful to receive support to help with increasing construction costs, implementing programs across the state and resources in the "gap" areas for the ecosystem. That fact that you are asking this question is fantastic!!! Small business owners (makes up the majority of economics) really need a "hold your hand" support network under all one roof with an environment that inspires. We can take state resources and bring into one space in partnership with the programs and the environment that the Innovation Hub would provide. Do this across VA and this could be a huge impact. Plus, add Northern Va companies that was to expand and keep overhead costs low....this is what they want (VEDP can verify).	To support the game changers in VA that have the passion, vision and desire to make a huge impact but do it in a structured way that helps with the implementation, decrease duplicity, increase impact over multi regions and assist with marketing of this valuable resource.	Female	Staunton
177	Community member		Support for new entrepreneurs	Information about willing investors/capital	Providing info, serving as a hub....not directly participating	Male	Abingdon
179	Community Builder/Mentor	Innovation Hub	Materials science of graphenes as a disruptive innovation across the economy. Time the Commonwealth awake from the slumber and plan to assist those working in the Central Appalachian Mountains of Virginia build the New Carbon Economy utilizing present capabilities of assistance. Sitting on the sidelines just ain't cutting it.	Venture Capital network access to those in the Appalachian Mountains frequently stereotyped as incapable, too backward or too far from urban centers. Instead, leaders need to appreciate and realize that innovation can and does come from the strangest and most unexpected places. And, like Daniel Boone of yesteryear, leaders need to see Appalachian Mountains of extreme western VA is a gateway to huge potential markets in Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia and others closer than Richmond, Fairfax, Newport News or even Blacksburg. We are Appalachia.	Access to venture capital to build a carbon graphene economic sector in the region that was built now on the nearly defunct coal economy. The neglect of the Appalachian economy in the 21st century is outrageous as we enter the 4th Industrial Revolution. Time to step-up to learn the needs of the region beyond token, compulsory visits to speak kind words followed by little action.	Male	Wise, Wise County

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182	Community capacity-builder		Creative thinking; B2B connecting; imagining the future; raising awareness; changing views.	Missing: trained Conveyors and connectors at the regional and local level; training and education for entrepreneurs; funding. State: comprehensive strategy applicable to rural and urban; resource sharing; training and education for conveyors/connectors; funding source identification and connection.	To broadly set vision, goals, objectives that reflect support for every region of the Commonwealth. Create a network of deployed technical assistance that is knowledgeable about the vision and goals; that stays attuned to resources, trends; that is able to apply and connect resources at the appropriate time and level for Virginia's Regions. Build Regional capacity.	Female	Middlesex County and Henrico County
187	Director of Accelerator Program: RAMP		In Region 2, we are increasing transparency to the support we have for entrepreneurs, and we can feel the momentum building. Of course, there is more to do, but we have started.	We need sustained support. We are raising 1/2 the cost from businesses, banks, and legal firms, with a GoVa match, but we need sustained funding for 5 years to get sustainable momentum.	The state's role in the innovation economy is to help regions with the resources needed to build a sustainable effort. I understand GoVA is shared, based on population, but it is possible to make an argument that the lagging regions of the state need additional resources.	Female	Roanoke
189	I have been a founder, entrepreneur, mentor, community builder and I provide services in this space.		The high-tech focus and plethora of ideas and research available to build out from for potential commercialization.	Subject matter experts whose area of knowledge is the multitude of resources and their availability for entrepreneurs to help guide those seeking and match them to what they can leverage.	Choice architecture. I believe the state has the ability to structure economic development incentives in a way that supports entrepreneurs to both create and locate their ventures here in the Commonwealth. In order to determine what that structures should look like, however, policymakers need to get to know the people they hope to capture as founders. What challenges keep them from staying here or working here? What makes other locations more attractive? What resources do they identify as needing that ALREADY exist here - yet they are relatively unknown to entrepreneurs? These are the kinds of questions and answers I would suggest exploring.	Female	Blacksburg, Va
190	Community Builder/Mentor	Mentor/Mentor Network	Virginia is attempting to make more itself more attractive to investors and start-ups. But it is still difficult for a small business here. The risks are daunting, esp if you are a woman or person of color or otherwise a minority (LGBTQ, etc.).	More overall support? Idk. I haven't really been to any of the "incubator" meetings so I'm not up to speed on what is currently available in the state. (Too busy!)	Directly make an effort to recruit: WOMEN; MINORITIES; LGBTQ; A DIVERSE VOICE to leadership roles.....	Non-binary/ third gender	Abingdon
192	Concerned citizen		Creating viable options in employment for our children to retain them as Virginians.	Tax incentives and less start up expenses I.e. licensure fees where possible.	Subsidies for Tech Schools and their students! Entice new business by providing a well trained, intelligent and motivated workforce.	Male	Wise, VA
193	Community Builder/Mentor	Innovation Hub	Community building	Commercial property.	Entrepreneurship opportunities for commercial spacing for business that leads to ownership.	Female	Norfolk

Ecosystem Builder, Mentor, Community Supporter

Response	Main role in Virginia's innovation ecosystem?	When building your community, how do you associate yourself?	What aspects of the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem in Virginia do you find most appealing?	What was missing?	State's role in the innovation economy?	Gender identity	Home
194	Community Builder/Mentor	Accelerator	Founder first culture, infrastructure of acceleration not obsessed with taking equity, the potential for cross-region collaboration	Operational dollars, data collection and storytelling facilitation	Providing an infra structure upon with private markets can collaborate to bring solutions to market in high growth startups and commercialization of research, it could work with universities to mandate better IP participation to encourage downstream investment, it can up support through operational dollars for ideation grants and non-dilutive vehicles to encourage startup founding, it could clearly market the innovation economy much better, it could encourage multi-regional investment from larger funds and corporate partners that are in the VA, it could expand tax credit allocations for both small business startup expenses, investment - particularly angel groups, it could incent corporate tax policy to spur corporate venture departments to be larger and more aggressive in ideation and early stage investment, it can promote high-quality internet access to challenged communities, it can streamline government procurement pathways for beta testing as opposed to only buying full product solutions	Male	Henrico
197	Community Builder/Mentor	Facilitator of business services	The partnership of government, nonprofits, and businesses.	More emphasis on promoting an entrepreneurial spirit in K-12 and higher education.	Need more incentives to assist the current business community instead of spending gobs of money as incentives to attract businesses to relocate to Southwest Virginia.	Male	Castlewood, Virginia
199	ED Organiztion		The creation and cultivation of the ecosystem itself is most appealing. The Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance is engaged with the local economic	I'd like to see the state create a state-wide Angel fund - gap financing in our region is the biggest request.	The role is to support VEDP and their efforts, fund VEDP and continue with a strong Sec. of Commerce. Dissolve the smoke stacks that fight for relevancy but are difficult to navigate.	Female	Lynchburg
202	Community Builder/Mentor	Accelerator	Sales growth and commercialization that results in new jobs.	More help with connecting new innovators with potential buyers.	Convener and connector. Making current innovation and commercialization avenues more effective.	Female	Bedford County

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204	Former state/current private sector participant		1) There are very intelligent, talented, and innovative people across the Commonwealth. When they identify a problem, they are creative in developing ideas and possible solutions. 2) There are many people, institutions, and resources (across sectors) strongly committed to helping such innovators succeed. 3) Region-specific approaches, with some state-wide commonalities. are most appealing as they allow more frequent face-to-face interaction and collaboration.	Not sure re: how "easily" filled, but there is a gap in terms of how to engage more of our creative citizens (not just those in "innovation hot spots") in the whole process of creating/deploying solutions to problems of all kinds. When there is are defined/validated problems - within missions with greater significance beyond any personal /professional benefit - I think there a lot more potential "innovators" and investors (of time, experience, \$\$) that will engage and work together towards solving those problems in order to accomplish the important missions.	1) Identifying (and Validating) important market/ community challenges/"pains" (at regional and statewide levels). 2) Providing forums to engage all relevant stakeholders in open discussion on challenges and how to address them. Building relationships and trust. 3) Facilitating cooperation and collaboration - assuring that participants are rewarded per their contribution - vs. competitive-only processes that stifle idea sharing and collaboration.	Male	Albemarle
207	Community Builder/Mentor	Investor Network	That it will grow and diversify our economy	The state needs to step up and fund building the infrastructure in the various innovation ecosystems around the state, in partnership with the private sector	Funding in partnership with the private sector building the appropriate innovation ecosystem infrastructure around the state	Male	Virginia Beach
209	Small Business Development Center		Working with both existing and prospective small business owners. Filling a desperately needed niche in the knowledge and understanding on how to run a small business.		Support the proven service providers that are already on the front lines of innovating all segments of the Commonwealth's Economy and leverage federal funds from the Small Business Administration.	Male	Norfolk
210	Community Builder/Mentor	Incubator	The small one in Northern VA and the baby one here in Hampton Roads.	Lower taxes for start-ups. Sponsor meet ups. Attract high tech companies to Virginia Beach around the new fiber backbone that has hit the beach.	Attract buisnesses. Lay a foundation for a new eco-system to grow.	Male	Virginia Beach
212	Community Builder/Mentor	Mentor/Mentor Network	The importance expressed by our leaders. The resources needed to grow the ecosystem and the awareness that Virginia is a friendly entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem environment.	Financial resources and incentives.	To support it financially in partnership with rural communities. Get the rural localities more involved in the policy process.	Female	York County
214	Government Leader		It's exciting to hear about new products and services in Virginia. I would like the State to be the leader in "green" growth. We need incentives and support for industries that will reduce packaging, reuse products, etc. and leave our state better off not only financially, but ecologically.	Not sure, but possibly more flexibility with grants.	I believe the state should offer incentives and tax breaks where it makes sense. We need to think about the long-term gain and not short-term infusion of money and jobs that have detrimental impacts on our land and people.	Female	Gloucester
215	Community Builder/Mentor	Facilitator	The opportunity for people to contribute to our community by providing jobs and services. It is also an opportunity to move people out of poverty.	Legislation and funding which encourages people to start small businesses and also to expand small businesses. This should include businesses as small as one [1] employee!	To encourage innovation and entrepreneurship with funding and legislative assistance.	Male	Northampton
218	Community Builder/Mentor	Local Government Official	R&D that allows the company to keep the IP.	Better align education system with a scattered workforce development system(s).	Workforce. Are we teaching to SOL's or are we teaching to the current jobs in Virginia that need to be filled.	Male	Prince George

Ecosystem Builder, Mentor, Community Supporter

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223	Local Govt Policy Analyst		Potential to grow jobs and enhance state and local revenues	Providing flexibility and incentives for work force training	Providing flexibility and incentives for work force training	Male	Richmond City
224	Community Builder/Mentor	Accelerator	Attracting new businesses and industry or assisting existing ones	I think the state does an excellent job in assisting localities in attracting new industry and businesses	I think some of the tobacco funds were not used wisely in our area especially in Washington County as for example 18 million for the Oaks Industrial Park. We already had plenty of unused industrial sites	Male	Abingdon
225	Community Builder/Mentor	Mentor/Mentor Network	How various agencies support small business growth.	Explanation of Opportunity Zones being on Federal Property.		Male	Prince George COutny
227	Community Builder/Mentor	Innovation Hub	The desire to help eachother and the overall feeling that a rising tide lifts all ships. It doesn't seem as cut-throat as other places.	A consolidation of programs/entry points depending on stage, so there is a clear path for founders.	The Commonwealth should lead the way in consolidating agencies and programs. The state is equipped to see the big picture and can create a plan that is well thoughtout and makes the most sense. It should not be an effort led by any particular region.	Female	Henrico County
231	Economic Development Director		Potential	Risk Capital	To build a structure from the ground up...a macro level solution will not satisfy the varying local needs. Let the local efforts guide the State's effort...by supporting existing efforts or having localities create a local plan the State can support.	Male	Albemarle County
233	Government Economic Developer		Resources through SBDC and SBSD	A Guide and Comprehensive Document/Website that provides Information on Resources and Services for Entrepreneurs, along with contact information. Also support for local Entrepreneur Ecosystems.	Provide grant funding for Start ups. Create an easy process/template for localities to establish a revolving loan program. Maintain a directory of angel investors/ Venture Capitalists. Like the Business Ready Sites program for industrial/manufacturing sites, establish a database of commercial and retail spaces or small industrial spaces. Provide grant funding for local pop-up spaces and incubators.	Male	Petersburg, VA

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236	Community Builder/Mentor	Mentor/Mentor Network	Just moved to Staunton, VA from DC where I served as the Director of the Department of the Navy's Office of Small Business Programs. In that role, I traveled to numerous states and learned about their innovation ecosystems. I can tell VA has a lot of potential/great startups but there is more to be done. There needs to be more synergy across the state in my opinion. I'd love to help.	More connectivity across the state. A cohesive story about what the state is doing and available resources. I think some people the Hampton Roads area - as one example - think they have it made because of the ship building/repair industry. There is no time to rest on past accomplishments. I have seen more and more states build a cohesive story around their innovation contributions. The states are competing for limited \$\$ and it's just going to get tougher. The state needs to serve as a leader across the state - parts of the state should not be competing against on another but should be working together. The state needs to lead the way. The state should know what other states are doing and share best practices. The state should be working on collaboration opportunities and helping to showcase the state's technology. Does the state have the data, the big picture and does the state know how it compares with other states?	I have not been following VA closely enough to comment in detail. I would just say that laws are only part of the story. People need to know about them and implement them. At least in the federal government - there are laws and there are regulations that enable quite a bit - but people don't know about them. So the implementation piece is important too. Does the state have the resources needed in the Procurement Technical Assistance Centers and the Small Business Development Centers? In my experience, these are underutilized resources but also under funded and understaffed. I know the George Mason PTAC has a great reputation - not sure about other resources throughout the state.	Female	Staunton, Va
241	Community Builder/Mentor	Investor Network	Connections to philanthropy. Building connections to those who have historically found it harder to access capital. Connections to impact capital.	Support for an impact fund. Possibly side-car from existing VC funds.	I'm new to this space and don't have strong opinions here.	Male	Richmond
245	Community Builder/Mentor	Economic Development	Jobs and investment and cool shout-outs in the media	A hub where we can go to match potential prospects with higher ed research or a funding or something along those lines. Some sort of place that describes and connects people in the innovation/research space.	Act as a clearinghouse for information. Give support to local groups who are already doing the work. Help groups in other parts of the state that are not quite up to speed.	Female	Henrico
246	economic developer		how willing mentors are to giving the advice entrepreneurs need as well as the growing number of coworking spaces It's also inspiring to see universities' involvement in creating entrepreneurs. We just need students to better understand the financing portions of what it takes to start a business (not everyone is blessed with a check from their parents).		I have not been following legislation, but the more we can connect higher education with incubators the more competitive our state will be relative to states lagging behind.	Female	Richmond
247	Entrepreneurial support organization		Social entrepreneurs, specifically ones targeting issues in food and agriculture, energy, and water.	Greater funding options, e.g. regional seed fund		Female	Charlottesville
250	Community Builder/Mentor	Systems Thinker		Seed Capital Resources	Increased funding for Innovation Hubs and University R & D	Male	Virginia Beach

High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder

Response ID	What type of 'Founder' are you?	Year current business founded	Businesses founded?	Most impactful influences to your personal/business growth?	Missing 'influence' or gap easily filled by the state?	Aspects of local entrepreneurial ecosystem you find most appealing?	How do you feel Virginia could improve the support and/or resources offered to your local entrepreneurial ecosystem?	State's role in the innovation economy?	Gender identity	Home
21	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2018	4	Personal growth - mentors Business growth - access to capital	Conduits for state government to promote conducting business activities with Virginia based companies.	Networking and mentorship are quite strong regionally. Access to capital is finally beginning to form and grow which will help many companies in the future, but still needs to grow to keep pace with demand.	Financial support by the State of the ecosystem elements important to tech company formation and growth (VIC, RBTC, RAMP, etc).	Increased financial and programming support by the State of the ecosystem elements important to tech company formation and growth (VIC, RBTC, RAMP, etc). Increased CIT presence in the Roanoke / Blacksburg region as it had been in years past. Our region is overlooked far too often when funds are distributed in support of technology company formation and growth, including the entities which support, fund and nurture them.	Male	Roanoke
22	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2016	3	Having strong peer companies that my employees can co-mingle with and feel confident that they're in a region that affords them a backup plan for their family and financial well being.	The state has provided valuable programs for my companies including VEDP and VJIP. While this is helpful, more could be done to reward companies for growing their businesses in VA.	The more specific the advice is related to enterprise SaaS companies, the further outside of VA the support system is located. Investment in growth stage companies in VA is lower than peer states in the mid Atlantic and capital raises will most likely be from the North East or out West	Absolutely, but it will require tailoring programs and engaging at the local level to get quality mentors engaged and seed capital efforts sustained over time. Managing from out of the region seems to be in conflict with a goal to improve support and resources being offered to local entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystems.	The state can cultivate the environment in which entrepreneurial activity sprouts. Entrepreneurs aren't looking for handouts, but they need meaningful investments in the innovation ecosystem, managed at a local level, or else they'll move on to a state that executes this better. Either a nearby state such as North Carolina, or Nashville.	Female	Blacksburg
40	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2017	4	Real life forums/conferences where I could connect with stakeholders, clients and investors.	Really difficult for a woman to connect with quality, deep tech investors in the DMV area in a social setting.	I participated in an accelerator MACH 37 which was great for connecting me with qualified mentors	Non-dilutive capital investments, civic lead gen, reimbursements for relocation costs, subsidized office space for companies needing (expensive) secure workspace.	It takes money to make money. Pump money into our companies via non-dilutive capital, incentives for VA companies to patronize VA companies, and deeply discounted business services.	Female	Washington DC
52	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2000	6	Failure and recovery.	Seed money.	There has never been enough early stage/seed money in the under \$500K range in Virginia, DC or MD. I had to go outside as do all of my co-founders.	More help on seed and early stage money, technology-centric business advice and support resources, basic back office like health insurance for small companies, etc.	CIT needs a lot more financial support as do its various early stage funds. The idea that Universities are capable of commercializing technology or of telling any startup business how to grow is crazy. Academics generally have a very narrow view of what constitutes business. realities. CIT should take a more aggressive role in lead-incubating technology startups in the Commonwealth.	Male	Mathews
59	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2012	6	Support from successful entrepreneurs.	Seed funding.	Support from successful entrepreneurs. Support from service providers.		Incubation and seed funding.	Male	McLean
61	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2008	5	Building a quality Board of Directors	We received CIT Gap Fund investment, which was absolutely critical to the early phase of our company	Networking with fellow entrepreneurs - Mindshare, CIT, GMU, MIT Enterprise Forum, and other venues	Keep funding CIT. Where else can you help entrepreneurship in a way that (I suspect) is at worst zero cost to the state - possibly a profit?	1. Make it easy to incorporate in Virginia. One-stop website was very helpful 2. Keep tax incentives to invest in growth businesses 3. Fund CIT - an outstanding, credible "first investor". (Note - Maryland has an excellent, competitive program just next door) 4. Do more to promote in media Virginia's innovation and startup successes	Male	Oakton
62	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2007	3	Taking advantage of a new ecosystem.	There is enormous opportunity for CIT to be helpful in providing advice and investment. VA government should look at what Maryland does in this regard. I have gotten more than one request to move to Maryland as part of potential funding. Maryland's analogs to CIT are much more active in regional entrepreneur events including in NoVA. In my experience, despite being located NoVA CIT was not helpful in starting up my company even when I met with them. Much more excellent advice and resources are available from local entrepreneurs, investors, bankers, and lawyers.	EO and Mindshare are very appealing, valuable and helpful.	Study what Maryland's analogs to CIT do. Duplicate what they do best. CIT should partner/sponsor Mindshare alumni events. That will expose CIT staff to hundreds of successful (mostly VA-based) entrepreneurs and help CIT connect new entrepreneurs with existing entrepreneurs. Ensure that CIT is consistently promoting VA-based business. The CEO of a company I invested was advised by CIT staff that it would be better off if it moved to California. I have never gotten similar advice from the folks Maryland.	VA Government should market to/seek to have non-local VC firms open east coast offices in NoVA. The investment community in the area could be improved with such a presence. Add to the funding and improve the efficiency in state-led investments into start-ups. Do anything to reduce state filing and reporting requirements.	*	Fairfax

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65	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2018	4		At the very early stage of developing a business, when self funding and 'friends and family' often are the only funding resources are available, the leap to the next phase can be challenging. It can be achieved through organic growth, but often 'fuel' is needed to fully execute on a plan for high growth potential companies. Venture capital firms are not typically interested interested in this pre-revenue or slim-revenue stage. I found myself in this position with one of my ventures, where we needed to lock in on a strategic hire but did not have enough funds to pay the person we needed. We were at a critical stage and funds were not enough. Grant funding sources were not aligned with our objectives, and loans did not bring the benefit of strategic advice and collaboration. I heard about the GAP Fund and presented a proposal. After a rigorous evaluation of our business, a convertible note of \$100,000 was approved. By this time I had got to know the CIT team and knew that they provided a full and needed solution to fill that 'gap'. We		Continued support of CIT GAP Fund and other focused programs through this organization	Technology and agriculture are two very important industries contributing to economic growth. Both require innovation to continue to grow. R&D and educational grant programs are useful, but an active participation in venture funding to support economic development is critical and a significant success factor.	Male	Reston
67	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2016	2		The state is lacking Silicon Valley innovation culture . The investment community is risk averse and its hard for small startups that are Pre money to thrive in this environment		More sources for funding innovation	Budget allocation for early stage ventures	Male	Chantilly Virginia
69	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2001	5	Access to vibrant ecosystem of talent and capital	Easier access to debt and to the state as a customer	Find talent was easy. Finding world class talent was not. Too little based here	Help them make it easier to recruit great people to the state. Tax holiday on first 12 months of gains etc	The state should adopt cutting edge policies that are ahead of other states and require innovative solutions. For example require all transportation providers (taxi, uber, scooter, drone) to prove realtime location and status. Or for example require carbon zero status on all new cars and buildings.	Male	Washington DC
70	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2018	4	I had lunch with Steve Wozniak one on one when I was 14 years old. He had just taken Apple public. It was amazing that he took the time to have lunch with a kid.	Tax exemptions	Mindshare connections helped to fund a prior business	For me it is all about tax incentives	For me it is all about tax incentives	Male	Culver City
71	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	1999	5	other business owners and entrepreneurs in the region	mentorship and ready and available accessible risk-adjusted capital	yes, we looked at Mindshare, TiE-DC, YPO and EoY and other local venture and business leaders for access to inspiration and connections.	NVTC is too big and focused on bigger companies and there is NOT one single entity that drives any sort of local innovation like we used to do in early days of the iCEO high-tech councils and other information...	state should provide grants - with no strings attached...and across all sectors - not just technology...IT-enabled services would be just about any business and should NOT be in the venture capital business and pick winners...focus should be on ENABLEMENT....	Male	bethesda
74	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2018	4	Mentors / Executive Coaching	Yes, I am a huge fan of Traction Gap by Bruce Cleveland. It answers the key questions how state can help. And yes \$ is super important but if the state can also make introductions to the prospects of VA Companies, that would be a huge addition.	Mindshare was great during my days. I spent lots of time with Sean Mellon @ CIT, as they invested in my last startup and spent time with Tom Weithman.	I was in Bay area for few years for my 3rd startup and got involved with lots of incubators / clubs etc. Their eco system is robust because they provided end to end support for startups: Everything from dev skills to marketing to raising money to exit to just a venting system. BUT real introductions or real companies who want to help!	We are super behind and need to do more. We clearly have the talent and opportunity, the question is does State want to be on the cutting edge or be a follower?	Male	Fairfax
76	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2013	4	Innovation ecosystem of entrepreneurs, mentor/advisors, accelerators/incubators, and investors	Capital â€” specifically in the range \$500K to \$2M	Lots of attractive options with people and enterprises in the ecosystem, with the exception of investment capital in the \$500K-\$2M range.	Make a central repository of angel and angel group (and creative VCs) investors along with their particular deal theses.	Not familiar with policy issues	Male	Annapolis, MD

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77	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2014	5	Mentorship from subject matter experts and business entrepreneur's with strong interpersonal and clear communication skills. Particularly as related to energizing fellow coworkers. Access to cash and exposure to potential customers are the key drivers for any startup.	The healthcare industry today is extremely complex and non transparent to clinical operations and cost assignment. Most difficult is gaining access to subject matter experts from both the payer and care provider organizations to gain insight into these areas and present solutions from a "corporate" level. The current funded "innovation" organizations do no support these efforts, nor engage to provide such interaction.	The majority of venture funding and private equity raised to support my companies originated from outside the No. Virginia community. Boston, California and Canada were more interested and better versed with innovation and translating that innovation into commercial benefit. Today, systems integration has replaced innovation in our region with many of the regional "innovation" centers that are funded by state and federal grants, operating as office space renters and power point critics with limited ability to offer sound advice, or to make introductions. Through my own initiative and contacts within NIH I was able to directly apply for SBIR grants. The tutelage provided by one local innovation center for SBIR/STTR submission was costly, slow and poorly understood by the innovation center.		The Commonwealth of Virginia and region of Farifax have given tax concessions to large healthcare organizations within this area. The long term benefit of data analytics and the future role of DNA screening to identify patient health outcomes were part of the reason for such concessions. What measureable deliverables has the Commonwealth identified for these tax concessions, and how can local innovators participate with these companies to assist with meeting these delievable? Improving Quality of Care and Reducing Cost of Service to Patients should be the top two obligations of the organizations for receiving tax benefit.	*	Oak Hill
80	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2005	1	Positive - Darden MBA program; Inc 5000 programs and articles.	Increase \$3 million investment limit to encourage investment.	Mindshare; Tandem Academy; local law firms (Miles & Stockbridge, Womble Carlyle). Took an online course on Scaling Your Business at Stanford B-School	Investment incentives to encourage greater investment in startups; grants to startups and mid-stage growth businesses.	Tax and investment incentives. Virginia's successful bid to attract Amazon's second HQ was a superb example of promoting a growth economy.	Female	Fairfax County
82	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2018	4	Negative - hearing no, failing at one of the businesses outright and losing clients as three quick examples taught me more than the moments where everything went smoothly and I was "winning".	Commercial real estate Quick investment Network to help test and get large clients		Provide larger checks for funding and follow on funding	The states role is not just to grow the state but to help by reaching across state lines and become an influencer regionally, nationally and hopefully some day internationally. If that is done via investment, outreach and even marketing...then the capital required for such is probably minimal relative to the larger impact it can have on all of us.	Male	Reston
83	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2009	2	while I did not start the business i would have to say the network of fellow entrepreneurs and executives helped me believe i could do this and see a path	generally in Virginia there is not the strong VC and startup ecosystem like there is in other markets including some that have less resources so i would say a greater funding base and support system to foster more startups		innovation labs, plugging in and driving entrepreneurship in universities, mentoring	I think funding and policy to support an early stage startup eco system. This would include more state funding for seed stage, coinvesting with local VCs, programs with universities, availability of resources /innovation labs, etc. This investment will increase job growth and tax base with successful startups like we have seen in other markets like SF, NY, Boston, Denver, Salt Lake, etc.	Male	Vienna, VA
90	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2017	5	good: Connectpreneur, Mindshare meh: NVTC	lousy early stage support	Rebuffed locally, ultimately found startup capital in NYC. The company now has 500 employees and owns a building in Dallas.	Recognize that investing and supporting only fully done deals is a fools errand.	Invest in the ecosystem, including early stage, instead of focusing on supposedly high end and safe deals. You need the right people to create the visionary, bold, energetic culture to make this go.	Male	Arlington
98	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2017	2		More grants/funding for startups.			I think the state should help to foster a space where people are willing to take the chance on an idea/business, but with limited resources.	Female	Richmond
102	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2018	2	Customer feedback.	Gap funding, tax assistance, and access to healthcare.	Mentorship, Beta-Customers, and Angel Investment were most valuable locally. We sought Larger Investments outside our local community.	Tax incentives for established businesses to contract with or invest in startups.	The State's role in the innovation economy is to foster a sustainable environment where new and existing high-growth companies want to be located and conduct business.	Male	Henrico
105	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2014	1	The stress of running out of funding helped me grow.	More lab space	The Biotech Center has been very helpful and supportive in getting the lab and research resources we need. Virginia Biotechnology Association is the best networking resource	I wish I had better access to a network of mentors and advisors, but I don't know if the state can help	Virginia can support startups by making resources more readily available: co-working space, labs, funding, understanding tax laws, etc	Female	Williamsburg
107	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2008	1	My business partners at my first start-up. It was an amazing team and we bootstrapped the company.	Did not understand VC funding or Corporate Development. Would have been very beneficial to have better education on these areas and the ecosystem in VA.	Did not even realize that there was a local ecosystem, so nothing was appealing. By the third company got connected with the VC community and MindShare. Both groups were very helpful.	Provide the ability to promote VA based businesses within the US. There are resources to promote international trade, but most start-up are not ready for that level of complexity. It would be very helpful to have promotion at major tech conferences in San Francisco, Las Vegas and New York.	1) Promotion of businesses under 50M in annual revenues across North America. 2) Education on what is typical for the growth stages of a start-up tech company. How financing and corp development works.	snowflake	Vienna
121	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2015	1	Funding Mentorship from other entrepreneurs	Funding- early-stage funding is hard to come by in VA	It was hard to recruit talent and receive funding from my local community (Hampton Roads)	More funding focused on early-stage startups, specifically with young founders in mind (< 25)	The state needs to support entrepreneurial ecosystems, with a focus on young entrepreneurs. We are the future of the economy and Virginia and it can be very difficult to receive proper funding and support. My company was lucky because we had the full support of the University of Virginia.	Male	Suffolk

High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder

Response ID	What type of 'Founder' are you?	Year current business founded	Businesses founded?	Most impactful influences to your personal/business growth?	Missing 'influence' or gap easily filled by the state?	Aspects of local entrepreneurial ecosystem you find most appealing?	How do you feel Virginia could improve the support and/or resources offered to your local entrepreneurial ecosystem?	State's role in the innovation economy?	Gender identity	Home
122	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2018	1	iLab incubator and local Charlottesville mentor, entrepreneur and investor community	Funding for growth; programs to help provide space for businesses to grow like commercial kitchens; part-time workers; educational courses on funding, legal, bookkeeping	Network of entrepreneurs and investors; incubator program	More grant funding awards		Female	Charlottesville
125	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2002	1	Positive influences from mentors and Startup Virginia.	Virginia State procurement is highly biased towards large corporation's product assuming the risk factor is low. The State, City and County level there is very little apetite to use Startup product use.	Amazon Web Service offers grant through Startup Virginia is found to be very useful. Also benefitted from the mentors associated with the incubator. We are planning to explore outside local community for investment.	Encourage State and local to use locally produced software and other products. Give incentives to promote locally developed products as it helps local economy.	Build awareness in the State and Local procurement agencies importance of buying products made in Virginia. Mandate all RFP/RFI/IFB documents be accepted in digital formats. Currently most RFPs are accepted in printed pages, that run into 200+ pages and several copies are demanded. Mandate agencies to make procurement decision within a defined periods. Many agencies do not take an action for a year or more.	Male	Glen Allen
128	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2017	1	professors, mentors/advisers, investors	early stage grants	went to outside accelerators for capital and resources	more private investors at earlier stages, bring in some strategic mentors from diverse businesses increase amount of technical ppl in area	bring in new tech people, encourage early stage founders via grants or programs like g-beta where startups potentially get grant at end -- ie they do this in Omaha	Female	Richmond VA
131	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2014	1	Being a software engineer at Amazon.com	Legal structure, fundraising, taxes... I think we've done well in this space but I feel the imposter syndrome most for these topics.	My co-founder and I have decided to live in Harrisonburg for family and lifestyle reasons. Aside from the event we met at (Startup Weekend) put on by a combination of local gov't, industry, and academic institutions (JMU) and a local angel investor, I don't know that our *local* ecosystem has much impact in the trajectory of our business.			Male	Harrisonburg
142	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2011	2	Network of local business owners and service providers	No	Network that is broader than local community	Potential tax incentives for start ups	I believe the state should do its best to incentivize innovation through tax policy, funding of higher education and attracting talent to relocate to Virginia.	Male	Vienna
165	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2003	2	Strong advisors both within the Commonwealth and outside who had been through the journey of building a high-growth company, raising capital, obtaining FDA approval for a biopharmaceutical and/or device, connections to other entrepreneurs.	Pre-seed and seed funding and clear connections to the investor community...someone to bridge the journey from start-up through acceleration to being venture-ready entrepreneurs.	The biotech park was helpful but did not have much to offer at the time- it is getting much, much better now with the change in organization and focus as Activation Capital. We had to go outside for a lot of resources, capital and advice.	I feel VA is WAY behind other states in helping to foster a culture of entrepreneurship...bring back angel tax credits...provide tax incentives for entrepreneurs to build and grow their companies in the Commonwealth and get funding to those organizations like activation capital who are actually making change happen in a positive and progressive manner. Help stand up seed funding/early stage funding and invest in the entrepreneurial ecosystem by providing grants for new innovative spaces/infrastructure, accelerators, etc	If the state wants to be serious about attracting high growth start-ups, they must provide the capital resources and offer grants to organizations who are investing heavily in the start-up ecosystem here....place, people, programs - but run by experienced founders and investors...not academics or government personnel that have never started a company.	Male	Moseley
183	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2015	6	Probably Dick Ash's entrepreneurship course during my MBA studies at William & Mary. It was more helpful than any one thing I've done.	I think Virginia is, especially in Tidewater, quite far behind in understanding/supporting the content industries and in appreciating their future importance in our industrial/economic landscape.	Honestly if we had it to do over again we'd do it somewhere else. The education rate in the 757 is low and there's little forward thinking. Most "resources" for entrepreneurs seem to be about putting up numbers of people served to keep grant money coming and not actually giving the businesses the help they really need or even making a commitment to success. It's mostly remedial workshops, grants you don't get, and the old boy network telling you how it was in their day. The "resources" here are almost entirely a waste of valuable time for any entrepreneur who is not at a very basic level.	Other than grants to put brick and mortar in bad neighborhoods and having directors of this or that come from Richmond for drive-bys, I don't know of anything locally the state's involved in so getting that word out better would be a start. New businesses need potential customers to hear about them and they need money. The various pitch contests are small potatoes and things like 757 Angels are both private and very clique-ish. Virginia's efforts seem to be focused on extending this entrepreneurship industry--the industry of offering services and (false) hope to entrepreneurs in exchange for grants to pay those industry workers and very little on actually turning Virginia startups into growing, national concerns that can lead the state, the country, or their industry. Entrepreneurship is the product that's being sold to the state, entrepreneurs are the raw material that gets ground up in the process.	I said it above. Virginia's role seem to be to fund universities and programs focused on attendance and throughput, not successful business launches. It's not a complete waste of time and money but it's never substantially helped me or any of the dozens of entrepreneurs I know. We've all gone to the networking and the presentations and the pitches and on and on and eventually we just tune out because it doesn't put money in the bank--ever.	Male	VIRGINIA BEACH
184	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2016	3	Boot camps that helped with investor pitches.	Maryland Venture Fund does a nice job of co-investing with venture funds. Virginia should look to them for ideas.			The state needs to nurture and foster an eco-system that benefits startups. It includes investment and grant monies, mentors, links to universities, service providers and larger companies. Startups need backing of the state to succeed.	Male	McLean, Fairfax

High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder

Response ID	What type of 'Founder' are you?	Year current business founded	Businesses founded?	Most impactful influences to your personal/business growth?	Missing 'influence' or gap easily filled by the state?	Aspects of local entrepreneurial ecosystem you find most appealing?	How do you feel Virginia could improve the support and/or resources offered to your local entrepreneurial ecosystem?	State's role in the innovation economy?	Gender identity	Home
185	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2017	3	1. Technology Evolution and Revolution Stories: Disruptive Tech 2. Family: Father was a professor and always making breakthroughs in science (micro and molecular biology) His friends/grad students etc. 3. Grandfather: Always inventing at home - original hacker/rubegoldberg 4. Limiters, I hate them. I've always loved reading things like popular mechanics growing up and learning about the new technology that really - truly solves a problem. 5. I've been a process engineer- I was hired to be a change agent. I made some large companies a lot of money - but it's always hard to complete on the job unless the top management is really following advice. 6. Mentors - Dick Daugherty, Henry Bass, Mary Miller, Robert McAden - all positive.	There are several areas. I can only speak from the last 3-4 years of developing a start-up in SW Virginia. I would say a set of resources for companies as they transition through the stages would be the most beneficial. What is available currently are several programs, accelerators, soem contests, institutes, and websites outside of universities that are disjointed and non-connected. (ATMO) They do not work together, do not follow each other, do not really know each other, don't know what each other are up to. In the community of start-ups several of us feel they actively work against each other and are jealous of each who gets more "attention" from the state. They are all fighting for small grants against one another.	I sought out advice and made contact with the following: RAMP (The best in the area - most comprehensive programming and support network. ATMO - and others - needs additional resources and programming to allow & help to new companies at various stages. Tends to be single program focused and tries to make all companies fit the mold.) SCORE - Roa (no response) SBA - RBTC - Seems to be more marketing and networking focused. VIC GoVA APEX VT Alum VTIP Montgomery Economic Development Roanoke Economic Development VEDP The Launch Place Light House Labs RVA VT KnowledgeWorks (was excellent while running. Jim Flowers and Dick Daugherty are great mentors) LX Council Blacksburg (excellent help and connection for local CEOs) SCORE (RVA - attended one meeting . Never had a response back from SCORE in the local area) Investments: CIT 757 ANGELS CavAngels 460 Angels (ATMO defunct and not in operation) (Considering the following) Piedmont Angel Network Charlottesville Angel Network RTP Angel Investments Shenandoah Valley Angel Investors Venture South Angels VTC Fund BlueRidge Angels BBT WellsFargo Blacksburg national Bank I have linked in on and filled out company info on the	The state needs a common directive and goal setting for the localities and programs to find a way to work together and promote companies in their own areas to the state level. The regional communities should be sending their companies to other regions to work in those areas. There should be - like in education a primary through advanced program that focuses from the Local, to Regional, and then State level. If you grow it that way - and then have a 1-2 maybe 3x per year competition/VC DemoDay then VC will know this is a very high level competition and come to the event. Right now, you have hopeful companies attending any event they can go to - and these events are very poorly attended by both angels, VC and even at the political level. Once you get a company educated on start-up get them help from elsewhere. Right now it feels like (again SWVA opinion) that they want to keep the company in the area more than promote and possibly loose the company to another area. The attitude seems to be succeed here or good luck. because we have all the resources you need here - which is not the case. I would add, that in my area, it seems to be that it's always the same guys who are running the programs or have their finger on the scale. Why are there not mentors or some settings where local successful and young entrepreneurs (not in college) I mean really running a business or struggling to meet up?	I think I said everything above. I have more ideas and specific items but they are too focused on the area rather than the top one or two key metrics that could really move the needle. Focus on the above first and get the general support network/system for start-up promotion and education working and then find what the next level brings for UDEs. If I were to say one event the state could do: Get all the accelerators and programs to hold a single event for pitch compenition for money - non-dilutive. Make it 3 days long. Several pitches. Make it a start-up fest, do not tie it to anything else. Get the news there. Promote Start-Ups in virginia, make it the biggest competition in South, then East Coast,...only open to VA start-ups in the last 5 years. Categories - investments, traction, revenue < 1M. Think about this: The state and VT gave Amazon how much money for taxes and to get into VA...of that if you took 1 M and gave 10 start-ups 100k to be in VA - one would probably make it big in 3 years. But that would be in VA and it would be meaningful. Stop doing the universtiy thing. Universtities invent, generally they do not implement. It's not their mission.	Male	Blacksburg, VA
201	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2013	3	Trusted Venture executives were positive	Contract support for state local federal opportunities	Venture advisors front boston/nyc. Strategic executives all out of state to help advise. Mindshare network locally was helpful.	More seed and series A VCs in the area for early stage.		Female	Arlington VA
220	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2014	1	The Staunton Creative Community Fund was extremely impactful in influencing the direction of the company and its social mission.	An office or specialist that is well versed in high-growth startups, not just traditional small-business startups.	The ease with which I could get meetings with key players, be they investors, public officials, or potential clients.	See #7, and of course, capital. :)	In addition to helping innovation startups navigate state bureaucracies, I think it's important for the state to be proactive in addressing policy needs where legislation could assist startups in particular sectors. For instance, we're working in FinTech and there are things that legislatures in other states (CA, of course) have done to improve the climate for innovation in this area. Specifically in easing barriers to entry so that a startup does not have to have great resources (like \$200k net assets) to try out a new service, without putting consumers at risk.	Male	Staunton
230	High Growth (Venture-backed) Founder	2019	3	Having one or more experienced mentors.	Provide guidance to help navigate the various resources available to the entrepreneur and the startup. I believe there are a lot of good tools and programs available, but how do I best utilize them?	I have sought advice outside the local ecosystem, particularly on tech transfer and SaaS-based business models. Looking at investment and programming options outside as well, particularly in the Boston, DC and NYC areas.	Again: Provide guidance to help navigate the various resources available to the entrepreneur and the startup. I believe there are a lot of good tools and programs available, but how do I best utilize them?	The state should be actively engaged in nurturing the innovation economy in VA. Greater access to capital is needed in all stages of growth.	Male	Powhatan

Other Founders

Response ID	What type of 'Founder' are you?	State's role in the innovation economy?	What aspects of the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem in Virginia do you find most appealing?	Gender identity	Home
7	Aspiring Founder	Education of the workforce. Quality infrastructure.	Working to launch in an under saturated community. Hometown support	Female	Roanoke
12	Aspiring Founder	Workforce education, infrastructure development	Enterprise IT, environmental monitoring, applications of technology to help first responders	Male	Montgomery
66	Aspiring Founder			Male	Rockville
132	Aspiring Founder	Low taxes, infrastructure.	High Tech start-ups	Male	Virginia Beach
136	Aspiring Founder	I think the state should invest in start-ups that invest in education because an educated society benefits the whole. I think there should be money allocated to rural counties, like Rockingham, that would allow a business to get started and give it a 1 or 2 year runway to prove the model and get the business self-sustaining with its own profits or with other investment money.	I live in Rockingham County and I see a lot of kids grow up in low-income or uneducated homes, graduate school, and fall in line with whatever job their parents did and just keep the cycle going. I'm interested in creating businesses that inspire youth to think outside the box and move things forward from where their parents left them.	Male	Rockingham
216	Aspiring Founder		The university relationships for offering entrepreneurship programs such as GMU's ICAP program.	Male	Virginia Beach
249	Aspiring Founder	1. Encouraging the infrastructure of the state to support new business development at all levels/scales. 2. Funding support resources for ALL small and new businesses (not only focused on tech, SWaM, and military/gov). 3. Eliminating regulatory and other burdens that stifle small and growing businesses.	Artistic and creative enterprises.	*	Virginia Beach
16	Bootstrapped pursuing high-growth	Remove barriers and provide entrepreneurs with space to try their ideas.	Richmond, VA and the unified high growth community there	Male	Harrisonburg
166	Business owner, and high growth potential founder (not yet funded)	Infrastructure to support moving people and products. More transit options.	Um, people are friendly? Honestly there is a lot to be desired, but maybe you'll ask that next. I do appreciate that CIT exists, but have yet to use their resources.	Female	Yorktown
92	CEO small group tech companies,	Promoting investment in technology development and commercialization. The investor base in Hampton Roads is not comfortable with technology companies.	ODU ARC and specifically Dr. Hani. CIT grants. Qualified Equity and Subordinated Debt Investments Tax Credit.	Male	Smithfield
229	Consultant	To invest in promising new technologies.	The support through SBSD and the amount of opportunity.	Female	Richmond
72	Creative / Tech Agency			Male	City of Falls Church
93	data driven	backing of fundamental research that is (by definition) high risk	Networking and access to top quality brains	Male	Washington, DC

Other Founders

Response ID	What type of 'Founder' are you?	State's role in the innovation economy?	What aspects of the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem in Virginia do you find most appealing?	Gender identity	Home
211	Experienced business founder	Consideration of tax breaks that will limit overhead expenses in the early years. Creating community forums. Relaxing of regulation where possible and where compliance measures are needed, making sure that compliance efforts are tilted towards education and improvement vs penalty and "gotcha" methods.	We relocated last year from very entrepreneurial San Francisco Bay Area. I'm originally from 757 area. I am thrilled to see the focus on building up entrepreneurs in this area. The most appealing thing is the energy behind this from multiple angles. I know what it takes to start, build and sell a business. Its not easy. So really glad the "village" is coming together to encourage this.	Female	Smithfield
217	Federal contractor based in Gloucester	Unsure	The opportunity to subcontract to larger companies.	Female	Gloucester
139	Grassroots Founder	Support support support (funding, mentor ecosystems, education) especially for first time startups	Startup grant funding available through organizations like CIT and GoVa	Male	Rockingham
160	Growth Oriented Startup (Non VC)	I think the state should help connect the some of the (somewhat) silo'd communities throughout the commonwealth. This could possibly be catalyzed by state-funded accelerators and/or public-library-model makerspaces.	The lower cost of living and lower cost per sq foot (specifically in the Shenandoah Valley) helps reduce the amount of financial risk in starting a company. I also know there are a lot of experienced entrepreneurs and creators throughout Virginia, and I'm looking for opportunities to connect with and learn from them.	Male	Harrisonburg
42	grwoing established business	There's entrepreneurship that's NOT IT and NOT high-tech or high-growth and NOT venture-backed. I now have an \$8 mil professional services federal contracting company that I started at my kitchen table with \$500.	support for entrepreneurs; need more for sustaining companies	Female	Alexandria
5	Have started over 5 Business	Provide more incubators especially in rural areas	Putting the puzzle together with the different players and move towards and actual business	Male	Blacksburg/Pulaski
113	High growth non-VC Founder	The Commonwealth nurtures and stabilizes the full and robust eco-system necessary for new business development and sustenance, including not only enhancing and providing startup grant sources but also serving the environmental well-being of the many associated private and public entities that serve as customers, vendors and partners.	Inventing a unique and valuable service that customers love while creating employment and opportunity as well as collective wealth.	Male	Augusta County, VA
180	independent business owner	establish consistent guidelines for review and regulatory oversight, and direct accountability for public funds dedicated to any partnership. Provide ombudsman to prevent runaway largess in attracting business by counties town or cities.	our Constitution separates business and government. "nor shall the Commonwealth become a party to or become interested in any work of internal improvement..." Constitution of Virginia, Article X, Sec.10	Male	Floyd

Other Founders

Response ID	What type of 'Founder' are you?	State's role in the innovation economy?	What aspects of the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem in Virginia do you find most appealing?	Gender identity	Home
152	Independent consultant	Fix the health care system. The hardest part of my decision to leave a big corporation was losing my health benefits when 2 members of my family have significant pre-existing conditions. I know at least 5 other people who have told me they won't leave their corporate job to start a business because of health care concerns. The recent change in VA law allowing solo entrepreneurs to get group rates helped, but it won't let me hire my wife, which I intended to do.		Male	RICHMOND
15	Main Street Founder	Support and incubation	Collaboration and available resources	Male	Weyers Cave
41	Main Street Founder	The state's most important role is to make it easier for people to start and relocate businesses here in Virginia. The state should pursue strategies that lower administrative burdens on businesses to make the state more attractive, such as eliminating the Business Tangible Property Tax for business supplies bought in Virginia and eliminating the Business, Occupational and Professional License Tax. The BPOL Tax in particular discourages high-growth businesses from locating or stating in Virginia as it taxes gross receipts, yet most technology businesses have high expenses and low profitability for several years after first starting. This encourages businesses to start outside of Virginia, and in turn deprives Virginia talent, job growth, and tax revenue when those companies IPO and early employees achieve liquidity and start new companies. Eliminating the BPOL is the single greatest thing the state could do encourage innovation in Virginia.	Access to and support from technology	Female	Arlington

Other Founders

Response ID	What type of 'Founder' are you?	State's role in the innovation economy?	What aspects of the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem in Virginia do you find most appealing?	Gender identity	Home
63	Main Street Founder	The state should be competitive with other states in supporting the innovation community that is in many ways still in its infancy. CIT funding in many instances is too small and too expensive. I wonder how many are familiar with the Commonwealth Fund. So communication with a broader group of aspirants is crucial. The funding should also seek a broader audience and seek to attract a greater mixture of innovators and entrepreneurs. Every effort should be made to expand the base to include manufacturing, medical, and other capabilities across the commonwealth. In so many efforts of this nature, policies unintentionally focus on existing, flourishing ecosystems and ignore those that are needed across the commonwealth for the benefit of constituencies that have greater needs. Think NoVa vs Central/SW Virginia. How do these policies help improve those parts and build on or create ecosystems across the commonwealth?	cross pollination, mentoring, sharing for problem sharing in managing and finding resources	Male	McLean, Fairfax County
79	Main Street Founder	Grants and investments in emerging technology	The tech business community and their willingness to help startups succeed	Female	Oakton
81	Main Street Founder	If Virginia wants to help startups grow from the fledgling stage to larger startups that will actually create jobs, the best way to do this is to provide tax incentives for investors in early stage companies, as well as for the startups themselves. I think it would be very interesting to exempt early stage startups from paying the employee share of payroll and state taxes for a period of time. Tax incentives that apply to company profits don't really help startups, since they generally don't generate profits during their fledgling stage...but they do have payroll costs. By reducing their employee share of payroll costs, VA can extend their runway and increase the successful conversion of early-stage fledgling to growth stage company (the stage at which a startup begins to create significant volumes of new jobs)	The entrepreneurial community has gotten stronger since the late 2000s, and there's a growing sense of support for startups in the DC area	Male	Arlington

Other Founders

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84	Main Street Founder	I think the state's role is to assist in the commercialization of research coming out of its universities, and to provide seed money for startups and other entrepreneurial ventures, while providing a nurturing environment for startups and new businesses at all stages.	Virginia's high performing colleges and universities provide much needed access to intellectual capital and brainpower in all areas of the state. In addition, while highly talented, it is cheaper to employ highly skilled workers in VA than in other parts of the country.	Male	Norfolk
91	Main Street Founder	Provide matching funds for SBIR research. Don't limit focus on narrowly-defined technologies. Don't limit focus on companies that were recently founded.	Business friendly environment. Good workforce. Good universities.	*	Virginia Beach
120	Main Street Founder	Is or should be? Is - I don't know.	Sense of achievement, owning something and being a part of making it grow.	Male	Albemarle
127	Main Street Founder	1) Provide resources for business regulations and other admin items to make starting and running a business in compliance easy for the entrepreneur. 2) Would be nice for the state to support networking and resource opportunities for business community.	Flexibility to manage my own affairs. Access to mentors and entrepreneur peers.	Female	Albemarle County
130	Main Street Founder		Means of connection and community among like-minded innovators.	Female	Harrisonburg
135	Main Street Founder	To provide exceptional customer service and support for those that are looking to start and grow their businesses in VA. For example, by providing all of its services online, on an easy-to-use website.	The State of Virginia makes it extremely easy to start and maintain a business.	Male	Suffolk
170	Main Street Founder	Shifting resources away from big-box retail to main street; providing greater financial incentive to entrepreneurs; investing more in all levels of education that encourage entrepreneurship.	Small business and small town revitalization and upending big-box mentality, which is draining local community resources only to provide low-paying non-sustainable businesses and sending profits out of the region.	Male	Glade Spring
222	Main Street Founder	Provide leadership and funding for viable initiatives. Commercialize it wherever funding allows.	All as I am on the GoVA council and a committee on driving this kind of entrepreneurial growth in our region.	Male	Amelia Court House
239	Main Street Founder	Entrepreneur-friendly regulations Champion for entrepreneurs More investment to help underserved groups start businesses Youth entrep. in schools	Govt. agencies (Arlington) strive to be helpful	Male	Arlington
118	Not sure what all your terms mean. I was co-founder of Rosetta Stone language learning software.	Anywhere folks are already showing entrepreneurial and innovation skills, the state should support those efforts.	I don't know the states entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem.	Male	Harrisonburg

Other Founders

Response ID	What type of 'Founder' are you?	State's role in the innovation economy?	What aspects of the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem in Virginia do you find most appealing?	Gender identity	Home
221	Potential high growth	Investment opportunity to support new, high growth companies who can return money back into the coffers and create new tax revenue. Attract existing and established tech startups to Virginia through incentives. Established companies are necessary in order to include gurus in the ecosystems... or else it's the blind leading the blind. Leverage innovative companies to solve the states wicked problems. Prevent cities from over taxing newly formed companies for at least 3 years.	The potential. Military opportunity	Female	Norfolk
101	pre-venture funded	The state should incentivize private investors to take on more risk. Cultural we need a less risk adverse investor class to fund revolutionary innovation. Currently we fund evolutionary ideas because of risk aversion. We should be the place Ubers and Web3 is founded... not the place were we fund variations of bigger and funded west coast ideas.	Virginia culturally is a welcoming and supportive place with good values and inviting environment.	Male	RICHMOND
168	Research consulting business	Don't know.	Quality of life – cville, Richmond, etc. cities and nature	Male	Charlottesville
117	serial entrepreneur with multiple startups	The state should allocate funds and resources to startups. This could include financial investments, grants, office space, and human capital (legal, marketing, etc.) The state could allocate funds to startups for support services which would go back into the economy. The state should also take a look at underrepresented founders to add additional support. The current program did not seem to understand some of the challenges of underserved founders.	There are a lot of people willing to lend their time and expertise.	Male	Midlothian
175	Small business owner-brewery	None is fine	I can't say. There are few barriers to entry. But small businesses are underappreciated	Male	Abingdon
94	Sold my business	The Commonwealth should foster an environment of growth and economic development for all its citizens thru Education, Innovation and Technology.	The fact that the Commonwealth is trying built an entrepreneurial ecosystem. Such as Mach 37, Smart Communities and the unmanned ventures.	Male	Ashburn

Other Founders

Response ID	What type of 'Founder' are you?	State's role in the innovation economy?	What aspects of the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem in Virginia do you find most appealing?	Gender identity	Home
203	Student Entrepreneur	I think the state's role is to help when help is needed. Also, without funding and proper resources, the sort of innovation we are proposing at Valley Rocket may not be possible.	I think more tech start-ups and funding to programs such as Valley Rocket will allow local entrepreneurs and investors to bring an unprecedented amount of value/opportunity to Shenandoah Area.	Male	Harrisonburg
96	Student Founder	Grants, Competitions, Retain Talent, Open Equity University, Maker Spaces, Public transportation	University Entrepreneurship Programs, Lighthouse Labs Accelerator, Virginia Tech Apex Center for Entrepreneurs, American Evolution Innovators Cup	Male	Blacksburg
99	Student Founder	To help small companies scale through increased access to resources and potential customers/markets.	Support at the university level and connection with experienced mentors/training.	Non-binary/ third gender	Richmond
103	Student Founder	Tax breaks to encourage risk taking, changing the cultural aversion to entrepreneurship towards innovation by backing projects	University students are full of passion and with the right support and resources, they can drive entrepreneurship and innovation. We in Virginia are blessed to have so many universities and colleges and it only makes sense to tap into the potential our students offer	Female	Albemarle
116	Student Founder	supporting startups through tax incentives and programs which provide resources such as legal support and educational opportunities.	the network - all of the people who have been willing to share their time and energy to try to help other younger entrepreneurs.	Female	Charlottesville
138	Student Founder	I believe the state plays a large role in the innovation economy especially when it comes to working with/hopefully bettering the state's culture.	It's potential.	Male	Richmond
141	Student Founder	Create a strong ecosystem of university entrepreneurship communities that can easily collaborate with one another, invest heavily in computer science, data science, and biotech education	Attractive accelerator programs, access to funding, ability to attract and retain talent	Male	Norfolk
176	Student Founder	Creating infrastructure for support organizations and fostering investment by local groups into local ventures. Keeping and growing talent and companies in the state.	Lots of mentor networks ready to provide free advice, and accelerators that provide assistance without taking equity.	Male	Richmond
195	Student Founder	To provide innovation hubs in the same way they provide libraries.	Virginia is becoming more open to startups and providing them with more resources, but I think there's a lot more room for growth.	Male	Tysons Corner, VA
126	Technical Founder	Being a female minority, I'd love to see programs that incentivize underrepresented groups. I'd also love to see healthcare alternatives available for Startups. Providing healthcare for employees of a startup can be prohibitive to Founders.	I love being surrounded by other entrepreneurs in the ecosystem. I'm a member of Startup Virginia. I also attend 1 million cups.	Female	Richmond, VA

Other Founders

Response ID	What type of 'Founder' are you?	State's role in the innovation economy?	What aspects of the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem in Virginia do you find most appealing?	Gender identity	Home
48	Technology Commercialization Founder	Creating an early stage investment ecosystem that will help entrepreneurs that have job creating concepts get on their feet. This should aggressively facilitate tax benefits for private early stage investors and earmark state procurement dollars for emerging companies. This also should rethink some of the regressive policies that give university faculty without real commercial plans advantages in applied R&D.	Proximity to tech industry and concentration of access to federal sponsors.	Male	Sterling
8	Venture-backed Founder with an exit	Capacity-building of the ecosystem and helping to bridge the capital gap of early-stage companies	Exploiting research from institutions in region to start-ups	Male	Roanoke
198	Bank executive; past founder			Female	Abingdon
213	Past founder/entrepreneur now community builder			Male	Norfolk

Investor

Response ID	Your main role in Virginia's innovation ecosystem?	Your level of Investment?	Aspects of the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem in Virginia do you find most appealing?	What was missing?	State's role in the innovation economy?	Gender identity	Home
39	Investor	Angel Investor	Collaboration between angels and VCs on syndication efforts	Series A and Series B capital for scaling angel backed companies	to create state funded investment funds to deploy capital throughout the entire Commonwealth and not just Northern Virginia	Female	Reidsville, NC
44	Investor	investment manager	We have established ourselves in several industries such as Defense and Aerospace, Cyber. We have found the ability to attract and keep these firms	We need to use the tech industry to better manage highway transportation in Northern VA	I agree the state should play a role in recruiting industries to the state and highlighting the benefits.	Male	Fairfax City
55	Investor	expansion capital, and angel		incentives for small businesses	We need the government to help automate the process by which we can import talent. Either from a modified Visa program, or extensions of existing.	*	Fairfax County
68	Heavily invest, mentor and support community		Proximity to DC	Lack of sophisticated investors and unwillingness of investors to invest in truly innovative companies. The state is a hinderance - if you want to help, lower taxes and remove BPOL for companies below a certain size, make access to technologies like quantum computing available to startups, get higher/ed researcher out of tech's way they have no idea how to go to market with urgency and encourage tech ecosystems that are devoid of red tape process. CIT and other Univ incubators are useless because they are run largely by people who never successfully bootstrapped or founded companies and they certainly don't personally invest.	Get out of tech's way. Lower taxes, and remove BPOL, encourage access to and use of next generation technologies (quantum, etc.), offer tax and other incentives for companies to spin-up here and stay instead of heading west. Virginia has always been a "nanny" state and unless change comes will continue to be -- to much crap legislation that hinders progress -- this is why we can't become SV east -- despite the worlds largest funder across the river.	This question is unnecessary and an example of paperwork BS at its best	Fairfax
73	Investor	Venture Capital (Series A, B, etc)	Mentoring new leaders--missing the potholes. Practical issues to get to profitable entities.	Practical education. Workshops on state/fed requirements and benefits. Early funding for innovation. Tax incentives for investors and founders.	Practical education. Workshops on state/fed requirements and benefits. Early funding for innovation. Tax incentives for investors and founders.	Female	Great Falls
78	Investor	Angel Investor	A decent supply of technology talent.	Catalyzing investment rounds in early stage companies. There are not enough institutions willing to sign on as "anchors" in seed rounds in the DC area.	The CIT's current mission makes sense. However, execution is sometimes poor. The investment team has too many companies to monitor and therefore isn't much of a resource to the management teams. Furthermore, when companies are faced with difficult/controversial decisions that are brought to a shareholder vote, CIT leadership chooses not to vote. While politically "safe," this is inappropriate in my view - it's abdicating an important role they play in protecting taxpayers' interests. Given their often significant position in the cap table of early stage companies, abstaining also often has the practical effect of tilting the outcome one way or anyway, so it's not as if they are avoiding impact on the outcome. Governance is an important part of being an investor. If you won't sign up for informing yourself of the issues and participating in key votes, it's not clear you should be investing at all -- or a steward of taxpayer capital.	*	Arlington

Investor

Response ID	Your main role in Virginia's innovation ecosystem?	Your level of Investment?	Aspects of the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem in Virginia do you find most appealing?	What was missing?	State's role in the innovation economy?	Gender identity	Home
89	Capital Finance Consulting		Individual and regional incubators are failing to provide actual "incubation" and do not prepare entrepreneurs adequately to raise capital. I would like to see an improvement in the incubation resources in the "ecosystem".	Capital Formation: Incentivize more early stage investment as was CIT's original charter. Provide Support Services: Build and maintain a network of service support for the early stage company and entrepreneurs.	Quit funding "feel good" and esoteric programs. Build and fund programs that incubate businesses with specific metrics that include capital funding and market entry as goals.	Male	Norfolk
97	Investor/Founder/Mentor		The conversion of an idea into something with physical reality.	The is significant enabling regulation that could make Virignia more competitive: For instance Dominion Power and the SCC are being sued by WalMart/Facebook and others due to the anti-competitive nature of Dominion Power. There are several concrete actions that could be taken to address this. Second there are several Universities (Stanford, MIT etc.) that generate more IP than ALL of Virignia's university's combined. This is due to how tenure is awarded and what is valued and how faculty are incentivized. There are several concrete ways in which this can be addressed	First: Virginia and Virignian's generally believe that all government must do is provide a level playing field for all participants. This would be true if all other states and nations played by the same rules. Virignia is in a war for brains and is not doing much to win that war. Question: Which University in Virginia receives the most Federal spending for basic research and development and where does that rank on a national basis?	Male	Virginia Beach
110	Investor	Angel Investor	It is an emerging market with close ties to Washington D.C.	It feels like the startup investment scene is limited in some areas and most file in Delaware due to tax incentives.	It is important to eliminate as many regulations for a new business to launch in rural counties. Local governments in small counties really push back on what is possible. There have been many times we were ready to invest in a small town but found it so difficult/slow moving that we would go with the bigger city. It was not because the opportunity was not there, but the people in charge made it difficult.	Female	Gloucester Point
134	Investor	Angel Investor	Taxes Government efficiency Low regulation	Sponsorship of incubators. For example, Virginia's mishandling of Mach37 was appalling. This institution was a low-cost gem responsible for putting VA in a leadership role. We should be funding three or four similar incubators.	I think it is the State's responsibility to ensure the growth of jobs in the future. Best way to do this, IMHO, is to sponsor and support startups in innovative areas.	Male	Delaplane
178	Investor	Seed Capital (Friends & Family)	Hard work and leadership of CIT	larger allocation of investment dollars to CIT GAP Funds	Correcting market failure; specifically the early and later seed stage funding gap for high growth potential s&t-based companies.	Male	Norfolk
186	Investor and innovation consultant		Lots of industries, lots of investment opportunity, great academic resources.	Adopting leading edge innovation and business validation best practices. I can help.	Subsidize education, training, a d sees investments targeted for virginia based growth.	Male	Montgomery county
219	Investor	Venture Capital (Series A, B, etc)		More PPP	Policies that facilitate and encourage more PPP initiatives.	Male	Glen Allen
238	Investor	Venture Capital (Series A, B, etc)	Healthcare, Military Veterans, Real Estate, Technology, Biotech, Media and Entertainment.	The state needs more synergy to aggregate start up ecosystems and local investors together. I can provide that solution with LocalVest.com A user would set up an account and create their own private listing and ask to join their local community investment group others. I'd be happy to offer a demo. Access to capital is a crucial component to the entrepreneur. A lot of great start ups quit because they fished out their pond or don't have the right network of investors.	The State should advocate entrepreneurs to think about starting their new business in opportunity zones.	Male	Prince William County
248	Investor	Venture Capital (Series A, B, etc)	The initial deal sourcing, funding and assistance growing companies done by CIT's Gap team to get companies ready for my fund.	More capital for companies. More tech transfer from universities.	Continue the work of CIT	*	Arlington

Researcher / Higher Education

Response ID	Your main role in Virginia's innovation ecosystem?	Institution or business?	What resource was the most impactful to your research?	What was missing?	How do you feel Virginia could improve the support and resources offered to research commercialization?	Aspects of the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem in Virginia do you find most appealing?	What was missing?	State's role in the innovation economy?	Gender identity	Home
9	Researcher/Higher Education	Virginia Tech Transportation Institute	Strong and longterm relationship with VDOT working to support and deploy impactful solutions onto our state's roadways.	Strong support and guidance on taking research from report to patent to licensing and new venture.	Funding is helpful, but guidance and mentoring and incubation/acceleration is also critical.			Identifying ways to help new ventures de-risk getting their company off the ground.	Male	Christiansburg
11	Researcher/Higher Education	Virginia Tech/NanoSafe, Inc.	Virginia Tech and access to analytical infrastructure and faculty.	Seed funding is always a challenge. CIT and their CRCF/SBIR-matching programs have been extremely helpful since about 2012, though.	More resources and incentives for faculty or student-led entrepreneurship. Educate faculty on how to commercialize research without sacrificing their tenure-track/tenured positions.			Act as a catalyst; reduce barriers to innovation and entrepreneurship. Plan strategically for the changing nature of work.	Male	Pulaski County
17	Researcher/Higher Education	Mary Baldwin University	We are looking to add academic programs in artificial intelligence, augmented & virtual reality, 3-D printing, cybersecurity and robotics.	Funding or assistance of some form for purchasing technology to support the education of future workers in this sector would be very helpful.	Linking education units with entrepreneurs provides real-world education/experience for students and lower cost support to entrepreneurs wanting to commercialize their products.			Similar to the above answer developing the opportunity for students to work with practitioners allows for the win-win of practical education and lower cost support for entrepreneurs.	Male	Staunton
24	Researcher/Higher Education	Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center, Inc.	State-funded university research.	Early-stage funding.	Early stage funding.			Creating tax incentives for investors to fund an innovation economy.	Male	Blacksburg
29	Researcher/Higher Education	Virginia Western Community College Educational Foundation Inc.	I don't conduct research. I work for a nonprofit college foundation that is a financial supporter of the ecosystem in a variety of ways.					Virginia should continue to support efforts like Roanoke's RAMP accelerator and work with higher education institutions to develop an affordable and accessible curriculum.	Female	Roanoke
34	Researcher/Higher Education	Virginia Tech	Market and competitive intelligence that helps shape dual purpose aspects of the technology under development to make it commercially relevant.	Pool of entrepreneurial management talent to draw upon that lessens need or desire of faculty to leave the university, rather act as CTO over further development efforts. Business model facilitation for universities to become a contributor to the "Innovation through acquisition" practice long adopted by industry.	Remove university silos enabling collaborative, portfolio based capabilities and intellectual properties that collectively address market gaps			Similar to the In-q-tel model, provide low dilution capital for university fostered startups to perform critical risk reduction of technologies (maturation), market it and acceptance, product cost, etc. This postures the company for acquisition by (VA) corporations that practice off-balance sheet R&D e.g. Innovation through acquisition.	Male	Blacksburg
75	Researcher/Higher Education	George Mason University	Recruiting top research talent to our faculty and providing startup investments to equip them for success	Virginia's universities still lag our neighboring states in the amount in research federal grants we bring in together. Investing in eminent scholars and equipping them to be competitive would be the first step. Federally funded research helps build up talent pool and becomes the source of new technologies that can lead to new businesses	More than on the commercialization, the most important effort must be on the generation of cutting-edge research in the first place			Ideally we should integrate VRIC, CIT and other research pools/vehicles into one 'Virginia NSF' that will strategically invest in strengthening our research and innovation infrastructure	Male	Fairfax
88	Researcher/Higher Education	Governor's School for Science and Technology	University research ecosystem	Interaction and collaborative associations with Virginia and local private industry.	Incentives and programs that bring private industry and public research closer together.			Tax incentives for innovation collaborations within the VA new product and business development ecosystem. Grants to cross-community groups to seed collaborative ventures among members of their development ecosystems. Fund high school and university level centers for innovation, collaboration, and entrepreneurship.	Male	Fredericksburg
95	Researcher/Higher Education	Eastern Virginia Medical School	Funding opportunities, closely followed by collaborative partners in either academia or industry.	I don't believe that the Commonwealth provides enough opportunity for industry and academia to collaborate/partner. There are multiple funding mechanisms, but the funding available is limited, which hinders partnerships and reduces output. I think the state can put significantly more funding into these types of opportunities.	I am a big fan of the approach taken by the Institute for Commercialization of Florida Technology, which takes the best IP and inventions from various Florida institutions and purposefully focuses energy and effort to promote commercialization of these technologies. The results have been very positive for Florida; I believe that their ROI is 14:1, last I heard. I think ramping up effort to promote our inventions would be helpful - especially for the smaller schools.			The state has to be supportive of the innovation economy by providing critical resources to the overall effort. Resources includes emphasis, funding, energy, and regulation/laws that make growing our economy more efficient and an effective expenditure of citizen effort. The state should be supportive to innovation, not an impediment to this type of growth.	Male	Smithfield
112	Researcher/Higher Education	James Madison University	"Gap funding" models to support IP filing and transition from laboratory bench proof-of-concept to productization. There is a lack of Availability in funding this critical development phase. Incubator, coaching, mentoring, and support programs (e.g., ICAP, incubators, etc.) are critical in this transition to early capital and sales. Connectivity to the regional and statewide network/ecosystem.	More funding to support research transition to incubation (e.g., proof of concept to productization support). Current programs require significant match (1:1) and expect an understanding of the business and market opportunities that are beyond that of a university researcher. Scouts and connectors are needed to assist support and change the mindset of researchers that their good ideas and technologies can (and should) be transitioned to commercial applications. Many academics do not view commercialization as an objective or potential outcome of their research work.	Programming for early career faculty/researchers to change mindset towards emphasis on commercialization as a valued outcome. Lower dollar "small bets" on promising emerging research. An easily accessed, well connected "roadmap" of resources for researchers to clearly understand how to transition research (e.g., timing of publication relative to IP filing, early equity and ownership discussions, awareness of resources when a promising outcome emerges, who to talk to and when)			Commercialization efforts have been highly targeted and very technology/sector dependent. There seems to be little room for considering innovations outside of these targeted domains. Further, they seem quite driven by specific higher ed institutions, which reduces buy-in. Some targeted efforts are important and necessary, but often do not seem to build upon existing strengths within the commonwealth; rather a push to be more like Silicon Valley. A rich history in agriculture in rural regions, natural preservation, tourism, etc. and innovations in these and similar domains are perceived as unimportant and disregarded in favor of building a tech/cyber base for a limited region of the commonwealth.	Male	Rockingham
129	Researcher/Higher Education	JMU	JMU X-Labs has created a platform for both support and research. I've done several IP disclosures, helped launch about 8 ventures, and am currently working on a new venture myself.	1. Access to resources to help get started. The SBDC is great, but they're not really designed to help high-growth companies startups. 2. Access to capital that understands startups.	1. Creating a New Venture Development Center - particularly for non-urban areas. 2. Promoting the area to venture capitalists. 3. Promoting the new startups - particularly in non-urban areas of the state.			1. Innovations come from problems - and solving problems. The state could take a more active role in seeking solutions from non-traditional vendors and participating in programs like h4di.org	Male	Harrisonburg
137	Researcher/Higher Education	marymount university	NASA funding for research, including tech commercialization programs also private foundation (Kauffman) funding for start-up of entrepreneurship center	state must consider how to fund ecosystem provided by both public and private universities. private universities have capacity for growth and state must consider them as a resource that currently may be underutilized for entrepreneurship	by not limiting their support to public universities. What makes the 'Kendall Square' (Boston) tech commercialization extraordinary is that its an ecosystem not comprised not only of MIT, but also Babson, Tufts (toothbrush was invented there), Bentley and other private universities plus the publics			yes, state must consider the value added to entrepreneurship provided by the privates. in the collective, its a pretty comprehensive ecosystem that could be better utilized	Female	ARLINGTON
146	Researcher/Higher Education	Emory & Henry College	Access to businesses and funding to support our research efforts and hands-on internships for our students is critical. Our students can be an asset to businesses and start ups.	Integration/communications among businesses as it relates to areas that have capacity for growth and development. SWVA could be a hub - buildings, land and people waiting to innovate - need leadership and funding.	Funding and vision.			Funding and vision for the state's future in the 21st century. Growing our population and success in SWVA so it can help support the rest of the State and become an innovative hub and the envy of rural communities in the country.	Female	Bristol, Washington Co.
154	Researcher/Higher Education	Virginia Commonwealth University	For students the most important resource is two-fold, through funding and guided mentorship and expert help, students are able to successfully build and commercialize their resources into products.	Leveraging all of the combined efforts of multiple entities working towards the same goal. I think there is progress being made, but truly understanding the support and structure for supporting entrepreneurs from ideation to validation.	More grants and scholarships related to innovation and entrepreneurship for university students. This allows students the ability to focus on their venture and studies without the added pressures and strain of working multiple part time jobs.			Related to higher education, in order for Virginia to retain talent, the talent here needs to be supported. There seems to be a greater collaboration among universities working together, however, I think there needs to be a better focus on talent retention for students with commercializable research and products.	Female	Richmond
158	Researcher/Higher Education	Virginia Commonwealth University	A network of people committed to similar efforts	There is a gap between the connection of student entrepreneurs and the local ecosystem.	The development of a more intentional entrepreneurial pipeline in education.			I am new to this space and not well versed enough in what has happened or been available historically.	Female	Richmond

Researcher / Higher Education

Response ID	Your main role in Virginia's innovation ecosystem?	Institution or business?	What resource was the most impactful to your research?	What was missing?	How do you feel Virginia could improve the support and resources offered to research commercialization?	Aspects of the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem in Virginia do you find most appealing?	What was missing?	State's role in the innovation economy?	Gender identity	Home
169	Researcher/Higher Education	James Madison University	Grant support has been helpful (e.g., through the 4-VA program)	Help focus on the development of innovation hubs across the state, and not just at the largest R-1 universities	See above			When it comes to education, prioritize investment in all of the state's higher education institutions (and not just in a narrow set of majors)--all of the institutions contribute to the innovation economy through the production of highly skilled graduates, many of whom want to live and work in VA.	Male	Harrisonburg, VA
206	Researcher/Higher Education	UVA	Seed grants to de-risk technology to make it more attractive for follow-on funding	Translational research seed grants (similar to CIT-CRCF) in the \$80-\$100K range	Creation a state-wide mentoring program for promising translational research projects. Mentors to help with a deeper market analysis, scientific/technical guidance, relevant connections to their networks, etc			Financial support of promising early stage technology. Creation of a centralized Innovation Office - a resource for items such as funding (state/local/other), mentoring, incubators, connections to academic institutions/medical center/industry , located in Virginia, etc.	Female	Charlottesville
237	Researcher/Higher Education	Atlantic Union Bank	Attracting new businesses, and varied businesses	Access to capital to ALL businesses. Even Main Street focus. They also spur and drive investments for fast growing companies.	One universal fund or supporting a platform for all localities to find capital and technical assistance.			Convener, organized, thought leader and funder	Female	Richmond
240	Researcher/Higher Education	Virginia Tech	Entrepreneur ecosystem organizers	Centralized database of IP and concepts that is easily accessible.	Focus on the large R1 institutions versus creating unreal expectations of the small-midsized public universities to generate R&D			Promotion and information gathering & dissemination	Male	Chesterfield
150	Adult Higher Education & Entrepreneurship Advocate					There are multiple organizations and resources available to assist individuals and small organizations identify and access opportunities for education and support to build ideas. There's a definite awareness and support for the idea that increased education and entrepreneurship are the way forward.	There are several. One of the most important is to promote coalitions of counties and of similar organizations across geographic areas to coalesce around a common purpose, strategy, and message. Help them find common themes and encourage them to build around those, providing resources and incentives to do so. Another is to help bridge collaboration between areas across State lines, such as in SW VA around Bristol TN/VA. TN is working on a regional initiative and so is VA. It makes no sense for these two to compete. Finally, I believe the missing piece is a substantial venture investment fund for startups and micro to small ramp-ups. The State can play a role in all of these which I cannot see anyone else filling, at least not in a lead capacity.	The new HB22, coupled with Opportunity Zones, has tremendous potential. The State should take the lead in pulling together regional coalitions to identify potential specific initiatives and then operationalizing them. Part of this needs to be venture capital investment funds to help individual initiatives launch - perhaps the best way to describe it would be "Keva-on-steroids." Also incentivize State agencies, and major vendors to the State, to direct business to entrepreneurial startups in targeted zones. The Johnson Controls (WI) "Supplier Diversity Program" which aggressively promotes opportunities for minority and women owned businesses, and which has earned them a place on the "Billion Dollar Roundtable" could and should be a model, but also for small businesses from targeted areas.	Male	Marion, Smyth County
143	Higher Education Administrator					To provide more job opportunities!	Funding opportunities to keep talent here...to avoid brain drain.	Scholarships, innovation/entrepreneur funding for college students!!!	Female	Bristol, VA
243	Research Commercialization					There's an openness to the ecosystem in Virginia that you don't feel elsewhere in major tech hubs like NYC, Silicon Valley or Boston. Influencers and stakeholders within the ecosystem make themselves available to most anyone. There's also an overwhelming desire to elevate Virginia so that our state is competitive in attracting entrepreneurs.	Virginia could certainly help fill a void in early stage funding, particularly around high priority, high impact industries that have longer ROI cycles. Generally speaking, investors will fill the need for early stage funding, so long as there is a good supply of companies/deal flow, and they are in industries where those investors will realize a potential return in 3-5 years. It's the biotech / pharma / etc.. industries where Va lacks that early stage capital, because it's much more capital intensive, and it requires a much longer path to market, and in turn, an exit.	I believe it's Virginia's role to create the best possible environment to stimulate company formation, facilitate growth, and attract talent. In order to raise up the next generation of entrepreneurs in Virginia, I think the state should take a hard look at how the debt burden graduates of our great state institutions face is leaving would-be entrepreneurs on the sidelines, because it's hard to take risks to start a business when faced with that hurdle. I also feel the state could look at possible IP reform on a number of different fronts, such as open sourcing IP from state research institutions that has lapsed or hasn't been successfully commercialized.	Male	Richmond
30	Researcher, practitioner, student team catalyst					Finding problems to work on. Building teams of faculty and students to work on those problems. Create MVPs and work to bridge the innovation to the entrepreneurship.	We have 15 programs running simultaneously that all have potential viability. The big gap we have is people that know how to take a viable concept and turn it into a scalable business.	1. Separate innovation from entrepreneurship. 2. We have 22,000 students that want to solve real-world problems (innovators) but very few who want to start their own companies. Start there. 3. Most basic reasearch is "solution" looking for a "problem." It is necessary to do basic research, but the idea that we can get "entrepreneurs" to take existing IP off the proverbial shelf and turn it into a company is not based in reality, fact, or historical evidence. Start with innovation! 4. Far more minorities and women are interested in solving problems (innovators) than starting businesses. If you want to grow underrepresented entrepreneurs, start with innovators.	Male	Harrisonburg

Vendor / Service Provider

Response ID	Your main role in Virginia's innovation ecosystem?	Describe your service?	Aspects of the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem in Virginia do you find most appealing?	What was missing?	State's role in the innovation economy?	Gender identity	Home
4	Vendor/Service Provider	Legal	Setting up and working on platforms that provide debt and equity financing for entrepreneurs and working with entrepreneurs who are expanding their business through acquisitions or joint ventures.	Legislation that would reconcile state tax laws, rules and regulations with the federal Opportunity Zone laws, rules and regulations, so Virginia investors and entrepreneurs can capture maximum benefit from Qualified Opportunity Funds.	The Valleys Innovation Council in Southwest Virginia is a great example of a public-private partnership with an increasingly important and positive impact. Direct more funding to VIC so it can build out its platform to support investor-entrepreneur interactions and the commercialization of technology being spun out of Virginia Tech.	Male	Blacksburg, VA
45	Vendor/Service Provider	cybersecurity solutions and services	proximity to quality higher educational institutions to partner with on research, a quality K-12 system, proximity to federal customers, proximity to like-minded innovators, state policies which embrace diversity and attract (rather than drive away) millennial job seekers	Further growth opportunities for collaborative public-private R&D to achieve commercialized results; exponentially growing cyber workforce initiatives to meet unfilled needs of employers	The most important role the state can play would be to establish and sustain a long-term effort to meet employer's hiring needs. This would involve the private sector, higher ed, K-12. It also means making sure the Commonwealth sends out a message that Virginia is a diverse and inclusive state, unlike others who are in the national news.	Male	Ashburn
46	Vendor/Service Provider	data processing	upgrading existing resources, entrepreneurship to stimulate economic growth, provide innovative economic development, encourage investment.		The leadership of Virginia should drive investments, new ideas, technologies and encourage economic development of businesses and foster innovation, strategic thinking and maximize resources- i.e., utilizing SWaM firms who are qualified to further consolidate, restructure, and transition programs.	Female	Arlington
49	Vendor/Service Provider	Data Centers	Data Center Retail Sales and Use Tax Exemption managed by the Virginia Economic Development Partnership.	Encourage Prince William County and Loudoun County to be supportive of data center incentives.	Tax, economic development, and education policy and funding.	Male	Herndon
51	Vendor/Service Provider		It is unclear and we are interested in learning more.	TBD	Fostering public-private partnerships to address the states most intractable social challenges	Male	Reston
56	Vendor/Service Provider	Wealth Management	Growth and sustaining value in the local economy - jobs, innovation, reinvestment.	Recruiting more venture capital to invest here in our ecosystem.	How can we foster the kinds of industrial innovation to be invested here and implemented here. Think of automated unloading of cargo ships in Norfolk/P-town/Newport News. How can we get those jobs that will be lost from that automation changed to creation, implementation, and ownership jobs of the software and hardware involved in that process. We know those jobs will be lost and we have an expertise in shipyards and software, why isn't that happening in Virginia?	Male	McLean
57	Vendor/Service Provider	Architecture/Engineering Design	This creates higher paying jobs that result in higher quality life across the Commonwealth.	Prioritize support of the Commonwealth's institutions of higher education. These are the hotbeds for both R&D and for the pipeline of talent. Very short sighted that this support continues to shrink.	Remove obstacles to private sector and higher education efforts to respond to the market. Too often, legislative efforts get "into the weeds" and end up doing more harm than good. Empower entities who can truly affect change and then stay out of the way.	Male	Lynchburg
86	Vendor/Service Provider	Business Management software	collaborative activities and ability for rebranding (or improved branding) of the commonwealth as bleeding edge	improve stature/exposure of the commonwealth on a national and international scale as a best place to innovate	"if we build it, they will come" - Virginia's role should be all-encompassing, that of facilitator, funder and flag-bearer	Male	Norfolk

Vendor / Service Provider

Response ID	Your main role in Virginia's innovation ecosystem?	Describe your service?	Aspects of the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem in Virginia do you find most appealing?	What was missing?	State's role in the innovation economy?	Gender identity	Home
100	Vendor/Service Provider	Tehnology commercialization	Initiatives by ODU, Tech Council, co-working facilities	Early-stage financing and venture capital. I managed a state agency in New Mexico that did it. It stimulated numerous venture capital companies to locate in the state. We also made equity investments in funds with offices in the state. I worked for one of them. And we also shared the cost of new product development in private companies. We provided the funds through competitions to maintain the role of a public agency.	Four roles: 1) Develop communications channels between researchers in state universities and corporations needing to develop new products. 2) Provide incentives for early stage and venture capital companies to open offices in the state. 3} Train entrepreneurs to make presentations for obtaining equity investments. 4) Share the cost of new product development through pubic competitions.	Male	Portsmouth
114	Vendor/Service Provider	IT Staffing	The various groups/organizations to join: -1717 - Activation Capital -RVA Tech	Having more events such as conferences/networking events/etc.	I personally don't see that there is enough influence/support from the State specifically. The groups that we are able to join are funded through companies and businesses. However, I do think it is great that the local businesses are able to fund these groups for startups to join a community of individuals where it can help us succeed	Female	Richmond
147	Vendor/Service Provider	Industry engineering consulting & higher ed research	The online resources seem easy to navigate.	Gaps in the system include: 1) Start-up funds for self-employed vs services that hire others. 2) workshops further Southwest than Roanoke. 3) Grant opportunities to support economic development for individuals (i.e., not at a university, within econ development position, or part of a large company which can sponsor employee time). Slight different comment. Currently, it seems that several issues move from the state to the universities to others which may be less broad of an approach than realized and may be providing funds in a less efficient manner than if handled outside of universities.		Female	Washington County
148	Vendor/Service Provider	Defense, Intelligence and					
149	Vendor/Service Provider	internet advertising connecting employers and job seekers	>talent pool in northern Virginia >Universities and NOVA community college engagement with business to create the workforce needed to meet supply of jobs	>greater need for investment in our incubator programs such as CIT >rebranding of Virginia as a technology powerhouse targeting business and job seekers >rebrand the states on line presence	>create incentives in attracting new business and keeping current business >ensure that our education institutes are preparing our students for the careers of the future	*	Great Falls
161	Vendor/Service Provider	Revenue Generating Business Development and Partnership consulting	Small and emerging BLUE Tech - ocean/marine related disruptive technology - Autonomous and Unamanned systems for marine and coastal	Partnering alignment - Summits for showcasing technology	Love what you are doing for unmanned flight - would like to see more support for seed money through CIT	Female	Upperville
172	Vendor/Service Provider	workforce training	expanding workforce training opportunities to Virginian's with disabilities.	Provide vocational training for high school students and recent graduates that will fill positions for employers within the Commonwealth.	To assure there is a pipe-line of qualified workers to fill positions needed by business in the Commonwealth.	Female	MOUNT SIDNEY
181	Vendor/Service Provider	Regulatory	A system that is self-sustainable, ecologically friendly with substantial results.	Fiscal investment	The state should lead in promoting an innovative atmosphere with emphasis on localization of services to enhance economic development in rural areas.	Male	Wise
196	Vendor/Service Provider	Medical		Incentives for locating here	There's lots of talk but little action	Female	Coeburn Wise County

Vendor / Service Provider

Response ID	Your main role in Virginia's innovation ecosystem?	Describe your service?	Aspects of the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem in Virginia do you find most appealing?	What was missing?	State's role in the innovation economy?	Gender identity	Home
205	Vendor/Service Provider	Technology Consultant & Multiple Vendor Sourcing Agent, Broker, Referral Partner	The adoption of advancing technologies in Rural Markets.	Telecommunications last mile in Rural communities is only going to happen with government assistance or the adoption of another Federal program similar to Universal Service.	The state doesn't have much of a choice, without the revenues that coal use to bring ending, govt budgets must shrink if innovation does not make up for that economy exit. The mountainous region initiatives in Tourism hold great potential but local leaders do not seem to be acting to take initiative that would entice the market to Tourism. Innovation will definitely play in a bolstered tourism economy however current innovation is not going to replace coal extraction and workforce income revenue. Some things that will need addressed in policy formation: if you stimulate tourism, as you have with Virginia Tourism, you must include a framework for the local leaders to follow that can help improve and develop around and grow upon the state's investments. 1. Laws and Resolutions Assistance 2. Developing Aesthetic Landscapes and Roadways (Mowing and Trash Clean Ups) 3. Financial Assistance for Critical Merchants locating in less than ideal marketplaces to stimulate Tourism.	Male	Haysi, VA, Dickenson County
226	Vendor/Service Provider	Marketing/business consultant	Being able to provide my technical writing and proposal services to the state government and other local entities as well as other businesses who may need my services.	None		Female	Richmond
232	Vendor/Service Provider	Business Advisor	linking various entrepreneurial support organizations (ESO)together so they support and leverage each other rather than duplicate each other's efforts, or compete with each other's efforts.	Both monetary and strategic support of existing ESOs rather than spending more state money duplicating what existing organizations are already doing or could be doing more efficiently than the state can launch and go through a learning curve.	The state's role should be one of assigning strategic goals regarding innovation, entrepreneurship, and commercialization of research. It should set targets for a variety of industries, regions, and entrepreneurial types and provide rewards for those who achieve those targets. The state should develop the culture, help provide the tools, and reward the private sector for achieving the targets.	Female	Staunton / Charlottesville
244	Vendor/Service Provider	Small Business Consulting	How to grow a company and manage people better.	Better preparing entrepreneurs to run a company.	I think there is a fine line between involvement and overstepping. The state should be focused on creating opportunity, not on creating regulations. Opportunities such as funding (which I understand will come with at least a few strings attached), education/preparation for running and growing a company, accelerators, mentorship, etc.	Female	Charlottesville